

Dale Weaver

Evangelical Covenant Church of America

Some Sociological Aspects of
a Swedish Emigrant
Denomination
1885-1984

Duss Rund
1985



EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH
OF AMERICA
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Emigrant Denomination
1885 - 1984

av
Dale Weaver

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Abstract: The denomination studied is an outgrowth of the nineteenth-century religious revivals in Sweden. It was organized in North America by Swedish emigrants in the late 1800's. Emigrant and religious background data are presented in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, the concepts "identity" and "environment" are considered in terms of their normal usage and in terms of their application to this study of a religious organization. Although "identity" as a concept is often used in reference to ethnic groups, its theoretical application on the group or aggregate level is unconventional. The problem in the study is stated as change in Covenant identity over time. The change in identity is related to fluctuations in Covenant environment. The 100-year Covenant history is divided into three periods. For each of the periods (Chapters 3, 4 and 5), identity is examined in relation to membership and congregation data on spread, growth and expansion; various institutions initiated and supported by the Covenant; focus of attention; and the "Swedish" quality of the Covenant. Environment is considered in terms of the basis of membership recruitment and in terms of Covenant relations and cooperation with other denominations and religious organizations. The early environment of the Covenant was clustered with the presence of several denominations vying for the congregations of Swedish "Mission Friends". Within this situation, the Covenant expanded rapidly. Until the late 1940's/ early 1950's, the bulk of Covenant growth and expansion occurs in areas of high Swedish emigrant populations; many Swedish Mission congregations joined the Covenant in the late 1940's and the Swedish language was still being used at this time. The "Swedish" Covenant gave-way to the "Swedish-American" Covenant around 1920, and the "American" Covenant emerged in the early 1960's with massive efforts to include "others" in the denomination. This has succeeded to the extent that the most recent figures show a predominance of people of non-Covenant backgrounds among the new members.		
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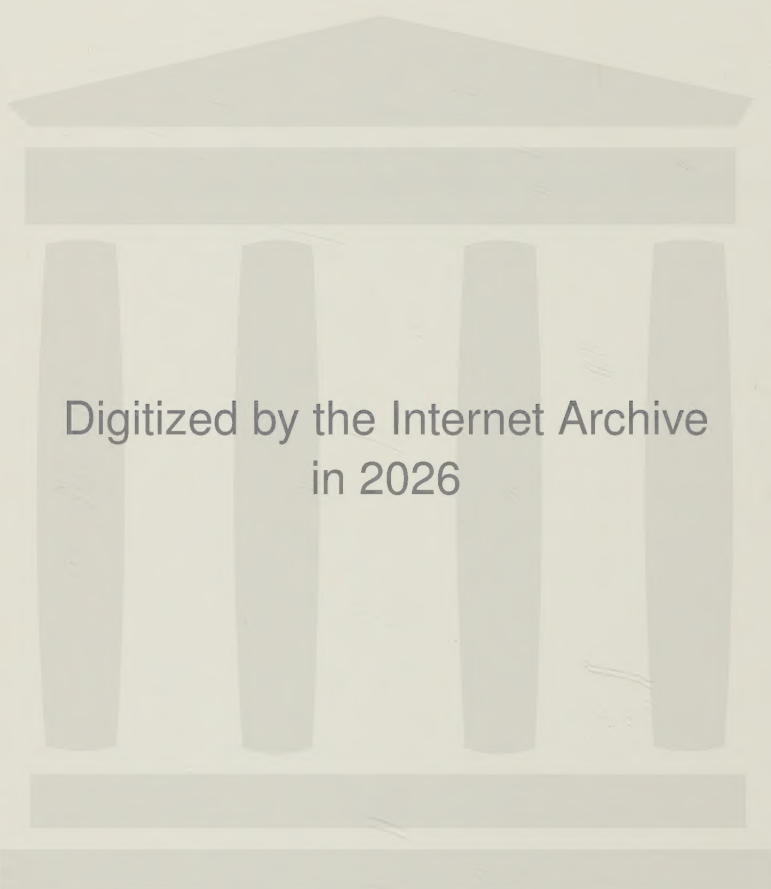
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1885-1984

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Lund, March 1985

Dale Weaver

The statistics included in this study, unless otherwise stated, include congregations in the United States and Canada. The discussion, however, and unless otherwise indicated, pertains to the United States Covenant. References to Covenant Yearbooks are made in the following fashion: "YB55:87", meaning Covenant Yearbook, 1955 edition, page 87. In as far as possible, the statistics mentioned are as of January 1 for each year, i.e. the year in which they are reported. Unless other sources are given, the statistics are taken from the Covenant Yearbook.

Abbreviations for sources include:

CA = Covenant Archives (followed by catalogue code)

CQ = Covenant Quarterly

The footnotes are gathered at the end of the book beginning on page 185.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Intention of the Study

The intention of this study is to examine certain features indicative of transition in a religious organization started a century ago by a group of venturous Swedish immigrant pastors who had determined to organize themselves and their followings into a conglomerate of religious congregations on what was then the Western Frontier of the United States. In this and the following chapters, The Evangelical Covenant Church in America, as the denomination is known today (hereafter referred to as ECC), will be studied against the background of its rather unique quality- in light of its contemporaries- of having survived a century as an independent religious organization, and not having joined- or having been joined by- denominations or religious organizations outside the original boundaries within which ECC was constituted in 1885, as The Swedish Evangelical Mission-Covenant of America (hereafter referred to as SEMCo). Whereas SEMCo and ECC are historically determined designations, the name Covenant will be used in this study as a broad designation encompassing both SEMCo and ECC.

These original boundaries had both ideological (theological) and cultural demarcations. First, SEMCo was doctrinally non-aligned and wished to remain so. They, in line with their Swedish counterpart (Svenska Missionsförbundet: SMF, also referred to herein as the Swedish Covenant), rejected the adoption of a conventional (traditional) confession of faith "as the basis of faith and commitment" in favor of a more open, undefined "confession of the Bible " as the only guide in these matters¹. Throughout the years, the Covenant has consistently refrained from establishing formal ties with larger organizations of denominations such as and including World Council of Churches and the National Association of Evangelicals in America.

The other aspect of SEMCo's initial boundary concerns the language, which formally remained Swedish until 1931. SEMCo's members were recruited from among those who had emigrated from Sweden, and the continual arrival of newcomers provided the denomination with a base of potential members for

many years. Although English was being used more regularly after approximately 1920 in many congregations -particularly in youth societies and Sunday-schools- this unmistakable ethnic demarcation still survived in the Covenant three decades after the formal switch to English.

During its 100 year history, the group has shown an even yearly membership growth pattern of about 2 percent, somewhat greater in recent years. Theoretically, there is no reason to doubt that ECC succeeded to a lesser extent than other immigrant groups in holding onto the second and subsequent generations. Nevertheless, immigrant off-spring in particular have a tendency to bring with them ideas foreign to even their elders which often create problems for the group or organization as a whole.² How the group or organization responds to potential recruits or members, be they late-coming immigrants or subsequent generations, is, needless to say, crucial for the future, more so than the immediate, survival of the organization.

Of equal importance, however, is the attitude of the group to the society in which it exists. An immigrant group or organization, not otherwise sustaining and promoting an attitude of rejection or separation towards its surroundings, must maintain a certain degree of normality and openness towards society both for the sake of maintaining the members' off-spring whose interaction with society is normally quite high, and for the sake of opening roads for gaining new members from outside the group's own ethnic boundaries.

Assuming that the group we are dealing with eventually determines to break out of its limited enclaves, adjustments must be made which necessarily entail the altering, at least in a formal sense, of certain indicators of ethnic identity. Among the most evident indicators are included language and official name; thus, in 1931, Swedish was dropped as the organization's official language and in 1937, SEMCo became ECC (see Chapter 4).

The fundamental assumption of this investigation is that the organization's image, whether internally or externally defined, was influenced in its formative years and later on by numerous factors including leadership, constituency, potential recruits, surroundings, etc. Furthermore, as the constitution and the significance of these factors changed in time, corresponding alterations occurred in the organization's image or identity. One task of this study will be to determine what these factors are, another to study the course of transition over time. The empirical basis of the assumption is grounded in the knowledge that the prerequisites of SEMCO as an immigrant group and, later on ECC, have changed; the theoretical basis will be discussed in Chapter 2.

In the remainder of Chapter 1, background information and data concerning the Swedish emigration in particular to the United States will

be taken up followed by a look at some of the religious aspects of the event. Then, a short account of the early background of the Covenant will be offered, followed by a division of Covenant history into three separate periods in anticipation of the analyses of Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of some possible approaches to the study. Following this, two concepts, identity and environment, will be presented both in view of their normal usage in sociological and related literature and in terms of what is intended in this study. In addition to looking at their separate meanings, an attempt will be made to relate them to each other and to suggest how one might best conceive of them in terms of the organization under study here. The source material used in this study will be discussed at the end of the chapter.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 will treat individually each of the historical periods outlined at the end of Chapter 1, using the concepts of Chapter 2. Although these sections represent the body of the study, it will be impossible to analyze all of the available material. Nor is such an extensive analysis necessary to achieve the stated intentions of examining aspects of organizational and group transition. Emphasis will be placed on those events and decisions which prove crucial to the particular development of the organization. The loose ends of these three chapters will be drawn together in Chapter 6.

1.2 Background Migration Data

According to statistics, some 30 million immigrants arrived in (the United States of) America between the years 1850 and 1930. Of those arriving from Southern, Central and Northern European countries were included some 1.8 million from Scandinavia and approximately 1.25 million from Sweden (including an estimated 100,000 unregistered immigrants). This quite humble figure for Sweden gains an added dimension when one considers that the population of Sweden in 1850 was only 3.5 million inhabitants. "Between one-fifth and one-fourth of all Swedes living during this period settled in North America" (Carlsson 1976 p. 129)

Not all the immigrants in America remained there. In all, some 200,000 returned to Sweden prior to 1930, resulting in a net Swedish population loss to America in excess of 1 million persons. By the onset of the 1930's, just prior to the Great Depression, the first great wave of immigrations had come to a close. The 1851 to 1930 emigration and re-migration figures for Sweden are presented in Table 1.1 below.

Carlsson (1976 p. 116ff) divides the period of time roughly corresponding to Table 1.1 into five phases. The Pioneer Period (1845 to 1854) signals the beginning of mass emigration from Sweden. Most of these early migrants were farmers and left in families and in groups; the latter often under the leadership of religious figures (see later in this chapter). Coming from a certain few regions in Sweden, they settled in Illinois and surrounding states.

Table 1.1 Swedish Emigration and Re-migration Figures:
1851 to 1930.

Period*	Emigrants	Re-migrants	Re-migrants in % of emigrants**
1851-1860	14,865		
1861-1870	88,731		
1871-1880	101,169		
1881-1890	324,285	18,766	5.8
1891-1900	200,524	47,138	23.5
1901-1910	219,249	44,029	20.1
1911-1920	81,537	37,153	45.6
1921-1930	91,932	27,474	29.9
Total:	1,122,292	174,560	19.0

Source: Bidrag till Sveriges officiella statistik, Serie A 1851-1900; Serie Befolkningsrörelsen 1901-1930; Ut- och invandring.

* The figures for 1851-1870 include all of the Americas; for 1871-1880, the United States and Canada; 1881-1930 for the United States only. The totals include about 5,000 emigrants to Latin America (Runblom 1976 p. 301).

** This column represents the re-migrants in terms of the immigrants for the same periods. It should be noted that a lag occurs between the time of arrival and re-migration; therefore, the re-migrants are not necessarily immigrants of the same period.

The appeal of land under the Homestead Act of 1862, the end of the Civil War in 1865 and the severe crop failures in Sweden in 1867-68 are attributed with causing substantial increases in emigration during the Famine Years (1868 to 1873). During these 5 years, 103,000 persons emigrated including 32,000 in 1869 alone. Now however, though group-migrations continued, the majority leaving Sweden were single men and women: "...sons and daughters who lived at home, farm-hands, maid-servants, trade apprentices, blacksmiths, and the like completely dominate the picture." (ibid p. 121)

The Culmination of Swedish emigration (1879 to 1893), saw over 40 percent of all Swedish emigrants between 1845 and 1930 leave for America. Of these half a million, some 46,500 emigrated in the year 1893. Nearly 7 percent of the Swedish population left during the 10-year period from 1881 to 1890. This drastic increase followed in the wake of crises in the timber, iron and agriculture industries that affected many areas in Sweden. While this phase of the migration might be characterized by increased geographical and social distribution, one specific category- married men-migrated to America by the thousands, leaving behind wives and families

Hereafter, figures declined only to increase again at the turn of the century. The Pre-War emigration (1900 to 1913) totals were lower than those of the previous phase. This period was marked by labor market unrest which resulted in many strikes, but also by a growing concern and fear that continued emigration might result in a shortage of laborers in Sweden. Carlsson particularly mentions the strong attraction towards emigrating felt by the relatives of many who had emigrated to America, a development which caused considerable uneasiness in some circles in Sweden and a fear of insufficient man-power in the nation were the emigration to continue at the same pace. Single men and women maintained a relatively high percentage of all emigrants for this phase.

This dominance of single persons was even more marked in the Post-War emigration (1920 to 1929), which picked up again after having decreased during the war years. While the number of male emigrants was generally somewhat higher than that for female emigrants, during this phase nearly three times more men than women left Sweden. Prior to the onset of this phase and continuing here, the number returning to Sweden from America was high (30 to 45 percent) relative to the number of emigrants for the same period of time.

Of all Swedish emigrants from 1851 to 1930, 38 percent were single men and 27 percent were single women. For both categories, around 60 percent were between the ages of 15 and 29 years. Women emigrants numerically surpassed their counterparts only during two five-year periods: 1896 to 1900 and 1916 to 1920. The overall ratio of women to men for the 80-year period was .77.³

1.3 The Immigrants and Religion

As mentioned in the previous section, the early emigration from Sweden to America was largely a family/group phenomenon and, furthermore, the groups were often under the guidance of religious leaders. Examples of such groups include the followers of Eric Jansson ("Janssonites") from Hälsingland, whose arrival in 1846, according to Beijbom (1971 p. 44) marked the beginning of organized emigration from Sweden. Converted Mormons can also be mentioned among the group-emigrants, as well as the followers of the following leaders: Peter Cassel and Polycarpus von Schneidau from Östergötland; Lars P. Esbjörn from Hälsingland; Erik Pettersson, Erland Carlsson and Swen Swensson from Småland (Carlsson 1976 p. 138f).

Also quite early in the emigration era, during the years between 1846 and 1853, congregations representing 4 different denominations were established on American soil by Swedish pastors and their countrymen. These included the first Swedish Methodist congregation in 1846 under the initiation of J.J. Hedström in Victoria, Illinois; the first Episcopalian (St. Ansgarius) Church in 1849 by Gustaf Unonius in Chicago; the first Baptist congregation in 1852 under the leadership of Gustaf Palmqvist in Galesburg, Illinois; and the first Swedish Lutheran (Immanuel) congregation in 1853 in Chicago with Erland Carlsson as pastor (Beijbom 1971 p. 51ff; Olsson 1982 p. 12ff). It wasn't until some time later that the Mission Friends got started as a Mission Society in Chicago, in 1867, and as a congregation at Swede Bend, Iowa, in 1868.

The years from 1850 to 1885 witnessed the founding of several major denominations among the Swedish immigrants including the Swedish Baptist Conference in 1856, the Augustana (Lutheran) Synod in 1860, the Swedish Methodists in 1877, the "Free" Mission Friends in 1884, and the Swedish Mission Covenant in 1885 (see also Chapter 3). Groups of lesser significance which found their way to America included the Salvation Army, Laestadianists and Swedenborgians. The former are still active, at least in Chicago, and persist to an extent in broadcasting religious services in Swedish. The Laestadianists settled mainly in an area of Michigan. Swedenborgians still exist in small numbers in Philadelphia.

1.4 Background of the Covenant

1.4.1 The Swedish Background

The outcome of the mid-19th century revivals in Sweden was the establishment and dissemination of several new religious movements. Some of these movements were instituted and nurtured from within the Church of Sweden, others were established outside the Church and are generally referred to as "free-church" movements. Of the former category, the Evangelical National Foundation (Evangeliska Fosterlands Stiftelsen, EFS) was organized in 1856, at a time when various revivalistic groups actively propagated their respective particularities through a variety of means. The purpose of the foundation was to consolidate the wide range of evangelical factions and missionary activities of these various groups, and to, "...within the Church create a revivalistic inspired institution for the purpose of evangelization". (Kyrkokunskap 1973 p. 116)

However much the leaders may have wished to remain under the canopy of the Church of Sweden, dissatisfaction mounted over various matters, in particular the strict doctrinal position of the Foundation. In 1878, some of those whose patience with the foundation had worn thin joined in forming the Swedish Mission Covenant (SMF). These founders wanted an institution free of the authority of the Church of Sweden and unbound by doctrinal confessions. In their own account, "One of the most important reasons for the founding of the Swedish Mission Covenant was to provide opportunities of mission work for those who could not bind themselves to the Augsburg Confession" (SMF 1903 p. 50f).

The initial efforts of the "Mission Friends", as the early sympathizers were referred to, were concentrated not so much around organizing or consolidating the movement as in sending missionaries to foreign countries, engaging travelling preachers to evangelize on the home front and starting a school for training preachers (ibid).

In 1888, at the request of certain leaders and in an effort to achieve a more rigid organization, the centers of activity of SMF were divided into 7 locally supervised districts which supported the local congregations by assuming much of the work done earlier by the travelling preachers. Along with the more defined organizational structure can be seen a broadening of foreign missions activity. During the first 25 years, the Swedish covenant sent missionaries to Finland, Russia, Alaska, Congo, China and N. Africa.

Among the early leaders of the movement were C. J. Nyvall and P. P.

Waldenström, both of whom were well acquainted with the developments of the American Covenant, having travelled extensively among Covenant and other Swedish congregations and societies in America (Waldenström 1890; 1902; Nyvall 1929).

The membership of SMF in 1890 was nearly 50,000, which increased to some 91,000 by 1910, 114,000 in 1930, and down to 104,000 in 1950 (B. Gustafsson 1957 p. 264ff). Membership figures have since declined to 80,000 in 1983. At the first Annual Meeting in 1879, 42 congregations and associations were represented, and by 1903, the number was over 1,000 (SMF 1903).

1.4.2 The Beginnings in America

The pattern of events preceding the organization of the Covenant in America resembled those of the Swedish Covenant. At least in the eyes of most immigrants, the Augustana Synod Lutheran Church assumed the role of the Church of Sweden in America. As was happening in Sweden, so-called "mission societies" sprang up in these Lutheran congregations under the leadership of (Swedish) revivalist-inspired lay-pastors. Not all such societies were approved of by the local Lutheran pastors, and beginning in 1868, these mission societies began breaking away from the Lutheran churches to form independent congregations. Initially, the organization of the mission societies was quite loose and there were no immediate ambitions to consolidate into a denomination (Olsson 1975 p. 28). Eventually, however, two synods of Mission congregations were formed: The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod in 1873 and the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Ansgari Synod in 1874. The two were not so much geographically separated as organizationally (Olsson 1962 p. 237 ff).

Yet a third faction comprised the "Mission Friends" as they were conjointly referred to. This gathering of many independent congregations was heavily influenced by the ecumenical evangelistic fervor of Dwight L. Moody and Anglo-American revivalism with its stress on individual salvation. It was also greatly influenced by Waldenström's teachings and by the Swedish Covenant, was personified in the Covenant evangelist E. August Skogsbergh (ibid).

In 1884, the earlier supporters of the Ansgari Synod, who disdained the formal organization of congregations into denominations, formed what was later to be known as the Evangelical Free Church. In February of 1885, in Chicago, the other two factions united to organize the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant of America, seven years after the start of the

Swedish Covenant. While the constitutions of the two Covenants were quite identical,⁴ the America Covenant very early adopted a more rigid organizational structure comprising those congregations and societies which formally joined as members.

Similar to the Swedish Covenant, SEMCo had its corps of travelling preachers which visited Swedish settlements and religious gatherings for evangelistical purposes, and the denomination set out immediately making arrangements for the training of their own pastors and eventually sent out missionaries.

Among the outstanding leaders during the formative years of the Covenant in America are included: C. A. Björk, President of the Mission Synod for seven years and President of SEMCo for 25 years; E. August Skogsbergh, evangelist, who maintained a Covenant school in Minnesota; C. J. Nyvall, preacher and incorporator of the Covenant both in Sweden and in America who travelled extensively in both lands. Nyvall had two sons involved in the Covenants: Johannes in Sweden and David in America. David Nyvall, former medical student in Uppsala and Stockholm, was president of and teacher at the Covenant school in Chicago for 23 years; Axel Mellander, trusted follower of Waldenström, and advocate for the independency of the Covenant. Here should also be mentioned the song writers and singers, N. Frykman, A. L. Skoog and J. A. Hultman.

As will be seen in Chapter 3, pastors and evangelists rather frequently travelled from Sweden to America (and vice-versa), criss-crossing the land, and visiting scores of Swedish (not only Covenant) congregations and mission stations. The early attitude of SMF to the development of SEMCo in America is uncertain. SMF literally lost thousands of supporters and scores of pastors to the American movement via the emigration, and despite early persistent efforts, the American Covenant was not always successful in gaining the immediate attention of their colleagues in Sweden⁵. Whereas SEMCo maintained an attitude toward SMF of paternal respect as evidenced for example in the minutes of the annual conventions, the latter records little mention of the former in recounting the events surrounding its 25-year history (SMF 1903).

In summing up the developments leading to the organization of the two Covenants, it might be emphasized that whereas the American Covenant became fully incorporated as a denomination both legally and in the eyes of the congregations which joined, the Swedish Covenant "was not a denomination in a legal or technical sense but a mission society composed of local mission societies or mission congregations." (Olsson 1962 p. 89).

1.5 Breakdown into Periods

The history of the Covenant will be divided into three periods to facilitate the ensuing study. Period I will be from the inception of the denomination in 1885 until 1930. The choice of 1930 is perhaps crucial for a number of reasons. First of all this year is often referred to as the conclusion of the immigration period as such (Runblom/Norman 1976). Furthermore, this year marks the beginning of a transition within the Covenant on a formal level with the switch-over to English as the official language of the Annual Conventions, a transition which for all practical purposes had already begun on the congregational level as will be discussed later. Although the language question did not present a formal hinder to outsiders joining the denomination, the adoption of English certainly had the effect of removing practical obstacles to outsiders joining either as denominations or members of existing congregations. Furthermore, the term of the second president of the Covenant came to an end in 1927, but the successor held the position for only 6 years. Therefore, the leadership underwent major changes at about this time. A third circumstance is the departure of many of the early leaders from active participation in the operation of the Covenant, as pastors, laymen and leaders alike. But perhaps the most important of these circumstance and the one with the most far-reaching effects is the virtual end to the steady stream of immigrants arriving from Sweden which for several decades had supplied the Covenant with new members.

Period II spans the years from 1930 to 1960. According to Olsson (1975 p. 116), "...there is reasonable conjecture that 1959-60 was a 'hinge time' with respect to the ethnic composition of the church", on the assumption that the second generation Covenanters were reaching retirement age at about this time. Olsson observes that the leadership "was rapidly being shifted to third generation Covenanters and to those without a Swedish ethnic origin or a long acquaintance with the denomination." This period, as will be seen later, was a transitional period also in the sense that the scope of the denomination broadened beyond its original boundaries (ibid).

Period III is from 1960 to 1984. In 1960, President Nelson inaugurated the Decade of Dedication, which signaled the launching of a drive to open the Covenant to a wider range of membership recruitment than had been the case earlier. These efforts to reach the "American" public came at a time otherwise characterized by faltering church membership figures in the nation in general. The question of possible merger with other denominations was actualized anew during this period as was the issue of formal membership in various ecumenical organizations.

2.0 The General Approach

2.1 Introduction

Both immigrant and ethnic¹ religion and immigrant and ethnic religious groups have been objects of study in many countries spanning several continents, involving numerous academic fields related to and including Religion, the Behavioral Sciences, History and Ethnology. Furthermore, these studies have included a variety of religious traditions, particularly of Christian and Jewish backgrounds, the latter being perhaps the single group to receive the most attention. From within each discipline, and reflecting international differences in schools of thought, there has emerged a broad array of theoretical and methodological perspectives and research models.

The present study is an attempt towards a descriptive analysis of the denomination presented in Chapter One. The analysis, which encompasses the one hundred-year history of the Covenant, will center around two concepts in particular: identity and environment. Various meanings of the two concepts will be examined later in this chapter, including general usages and the particular application of the terms intended in this study. The problem here and the central issue to be addressed concerns change in Covenant identity over time. The analysis will be undertaken primarily with group-level data or aggregate data, most of which were centrally collected and recorded from within the organization itself. In addition, other data will be included as available, including results from two recent survey studies conducted specifically for this research project.

As mentioned above, there is a multitude and variety of earlier research of the type intended here which renders it quite impossible to offer a comprehensive review of this material within the scope of the study. However, two perspectives which emerge out of studies of immigrant and ethnic religion in North America and which shed light on the denomination will be briefly mentioned. In addition, certain issues surrounding the

recent church growth and decline debate will be touched upon as they relate to developments within the Covenant before proceeding to the discussion of identity and environment.

Of possible interest in considering the Covenant might be the institutional completeness model with which Breton (1972) and others (see for example Driedger 1974) have examined the role played by social organizations developed and maintained within the ethnic community as obstacles to integration into the social community at large. Findings indicate that the degree to which social integration takes place for any given ethnic group is related to the degree of institutional completeness achieved, that is, the extent to which the ethnic community performs services required by its members. As will be seen in subsequent chapters, the Covenant did develop and maintain various service institutions throughout the years, many of which still exist, and new ones were continually being established. A difficulty in examining an organization such as the Covenant by using "organizational completeness" as the independent variable stems from these institutions' being too limited in numbers, too locally situated and too narrowly defined in terms of constituency to have contributed more than in a very limited fashion to maintaining the ethnic homogeneity of the denomination as a whole. In the case of the Covenant, it could be argued that certain of the institutions served both to protect ethnic unity and to promote social integration into American society.

A second possible scheme with which to study the denomination is the generational perspective one. In 1938, Marcus Hansen addressed the Augustana Historical Society on the topic of "The Third Generation in America" (Hansen 1952). Focusing on the problem of immigrant adjustment, the core of Hansen's thesis is the notion that the second- and third-generation immigrants experienced their situation differently: "...what the son (second generation) wishes to forget, the grandson (third generation) wishes to remember." According to Hansen, the problem confronting the second generation, that of living in two worlds at the same time, was never really solved; rather, it disappeared. The second generation cast off its burden through the process of escaping the "foreign" familial, religious and cultural ties in an effort to become fully assimilated into American society. With the coming of the thoroughly assimilated third generation, however, an interest in and rediscovery of that which their parents wished to forget develops. Hansen's findings have been both confirmed and contested in subsequent studies (Herberg 1955; Lenski 1961; Bender and Kagiwada 1968).

Certain problems arise in considering Hansen's thesis. For the first, whereas the second generation "forgot"- as it were- by escaping the religious practices of their parents, it is not sure if the third-generation "rediscovery" is necessarily expressed through increased religious activity, that is, is this "a return to", or is it more "an interest in"? Perhaps an even more difficult distinction to resolve is that of the generations; does one differentiate according to biological or cultural generation, where the first refers to place of birth, the second to place of growing-up, of socialization (see Lavender 1976).

Hansen's theory is perhaps more easily applied to a population within a given area than to a denomination with a large geographical spread. Furthermore, in the case of the Covenant, the lack of data pertinent to the second generation and the difficulties in collecting such data renders Hansen's model less interesting for present purposes.

Of wider application to the study of church bodies in general is the debate arising out of membership growth and decline tendencies of recent decades. In the midst of declining membership and attendance figures observed in several major American denominations beginning around 1965-1970 (see Hoge and Roozen 1979), Dean Kelley put forth several theories concerning "Why Conservative Churches are Growing" (1972), which have since become the focus of numerous studies in denominational trends. While others, notably Hoge (1979) tend to view the observed trends more in terms of the inter-relationships of several institutional and contextual factors, Kelley's explanations focus around institutional reasons why "strong" churches grow and "weak" churches decline. Of interest in relation to the Covenant are several of the reasons suggested for decline in "weaker" churches; according to Kelley, they assert relativism and individualism in beliefs, they are more tolerant of diversity within the church, there is no enforcement of doctrine or beliefs, they prefer dialogue to direct evangelization (proselyzation), qualities which are just the reverse in growing "strong" churches (Kelley p. 84, 95). It is suggested here that the Covenant would quite easily pass into the category of "weak" church according to Kelley's criteria; however, as will be seen in the chapters ahead, the pattern of growth in membership figures and the gains in the number of congregations seen during most of Covenant history continued - albeit at a lesser pace - during this so-called growth and decline period as well. It is therefore suggested that the factors surrounding church growth and decline for American denominations and congregations in general might constitute a further point of reference from which to examine developments within the Covenant.

2.2 Identity

One avenue by which to examine the Covenant is by using the concept identity. The researcher immediately notices the vast number of studies dealing with any combination of religion, identity, immigrant and ethnic religion. Despite widespread usage in various disciplines including sociology, the diverse meanings afforded to and the scarcity of analytical attention given to identity draw attention to its seemingly ambiguous and illusive nature. This is perhaps especially true in the sociological literature in which there seems to be a tendency towards treatment of identity in conjunction with other phenomena, as can be detected in the following titles: "Identity and Authority" (ed. Robertson/Holzner 1980), "Identity and the Sacred" (Mol 1976), "Identities and Interaction" (McCall and Simmons 1966), "Identity and Social Commitment" (Gordon 1978), "Ethnic Self Identity" (Driedger 1974), and "Identity and Religion" (ed. Mol 1978) to mention a few. Several of these authors including Robertson/Holzner and Mol have, in addition, pointed to the unbalanced treatment given identity when examined together with other phenomena wherein identity is given lesser attention.

Dashefsky (1972), is among those who have drawn attention to the lack of adequate conceptualizations of identity and the related term identification. From his analysis of studies dealing more specifically with the meanings of religio-ethnic individual or personal identity, several alternative conceptualizations are suggested together with corresponding empirical referents, in an effort to clarify the situation. Following his scheme, identity can be conceptualized from three angles in terms of wider, more general higher-order concepts; in terms of specific and more defined lower-order concepts; and in terms of identification.

Beginning with the latter, identification, both as process and product, is variously conceptualized:

- 1) in reference to the linking of oneself to others in an organizational sense through formal membership, or symbolically by conceiving oneself as belonging to a particular group or category;
- 2) as a process whereby the individual is placed in socially defined categories and which gives rise to self-identity;

3) as a product of social interaction wherein a person links him/herself to significant-others, a reference-group or with a broad social category such as an ethnic group or occupational category.

On the basis of the discussion, Dashefsky defines group identification as "...a generalized attitude indicative of a personal attachment to the group and a positive orientation toward being a member of the group." (p. 242). A series of such identifications serves as the basis for the construction of lower-order identity in any one of its manifold facets.

According to Dashefsky, identity as a higher-order concept is "a general organizing referent which includes a number of subsidiary facets" (p. 240). This function of identity on the individual level is compared to the role of education on the cultural level:

As education is the sector of the cultural system that maintains social stability through the production, consumption and dissemination of knowledge, identity is the sector of the personal system that maintains personal continuity through the coherent organization of information about the individual (p. 240).

Just as the education system can be measured through literacy rates and level of education achieved, so too can identity be measured in terms of "operationally definable and researchable units" which comprise the lower-order conceptualizations of identity.

Lower-order identity comprises both objective and subjective referents. The objective referents concern both how individuals are defined 1) externally in terms of broad social categories (called "social identity"), and 2) in terms of individual biographical information (called "personal identity"). Subjective referents, on the other hand, are an indication of how individuals define themselves 1) unconsciously ("ego identity"), and 2) in terms of cognitive phenomena including attitudes about oneself ("self-concept"). The components of Dashefsky's model are illustrated in Figure 2.1, which includes the empirical referents suggested by Dashefsky for each of the categories outlined above.

Figure 2.1 Components of Lower-Order Identity: Dashefsky

Modes	Conceptual Level	Empirical Level
Subjective	Personal Identity	Observed Behavior (biographical information)
	Social Identity	Social Categories (age, sex, education, occupation, etc.)
Objective	Self-Conception	Self report ("I am" statements)
	Ego Identity	Psycho-Analysis (non-cognitive information)

A definition of identity based on Dashefsky's analysis of the various uses of the concept might be expressed as information concerning the individual, and the ordering of knowledge about the individual acquired through both objective and subjective referents.

Whereas identity is ordinarily conceptualized on the individual level of analysis, the intention of the present study is to use identity as a sociological concept on a broader level which addresses the group or aggregate level of analysis. In much the same manner that one conceives of the identity of the individual, the attempt here is to describe a religious organization in terms of its organizational identity as may be described through reference to various researchable units of the organization. A more detailed discussion of the application of identity here will follow in Section 2.3 below.

It might be argued that a more suitable and less controversial conceptual framework from which to study the denomination might be in the area of "constituency profile" or "denominational demography": What is particularly appealing with the concept identity here is its association in many academic fields with immigrant and ethnic religion, and accompanying assumptions about continuity and change. While it is perhaps theoretically

unconventional to refer to an organization in terms of its identity, it is, nonetheless, quite common practice to refer to the distinguishing ethnic qualities of religious groups and denominations in terms of identity. It seems, therefore, merited to utilize the concept in sorting out the manner and degree to which the Covenant religious organization throughout the decades has maintained, altered or yielded its original ethnic distinctiveness, its identity.

Another important aspect of individual identity not dealt with in the above discussion concerns the process of identity formation. What is normally included in such a process is the means by which the objective and subjective modes of identity function conjointly in determining identity on both the lower and higher levels as presented above. The process is sometimes referred to as a dialectical process between society and the psychological reality of the individual: "Society not only defines but creates psychological reality. The individual realizes himself in society- that is, he recognizes his identity in socially defined terms and these definitions become reality as he lives in society." (Berger 1966 p. 108) On the sociological level a similar type of dialectical process takes place in the process of socialization. This process is described by Berger and Luckmann (1966) using the concepts internalization (the subjective appropriation of knowledge external to the individual), objectification (the integration of that knowledge into one's reality), and externalization (the utilization of the knowledge in daily life). Through the continual functioning of these processes, knowledge of society is not only transferred from generation to generation but also transforms and is transformed by the various participants in the process.

In this section, various levels of identity have been described in terms of their objective and subjective referents and from the point of view of identity maintenance of the individual. Furthermore, identity has been considered in terms of a dialectical process of identity creation on both the socio-psychological and sociological levels. In the following section, identity will be discussed in terms of the Covenant denomination as an organization.

2.3 Covenant Identity

The transposition of identity from a level of analysis commensurate with its general usage to another level not normally associated with the concept involves certain assumptions. For the first, it is assumed that the dynamic process through which identity on the individual level is constructed can

be operationalized on the organizational level as well. In other words, that the organization is constituted, is advanced, is altered and is differentiated in a dialectical process. For the Covenant, this might take place through interaction on two levels: with certain entities, organizations and denominations, and furthermore, through a process of dissemination and proselytization whereby the idiomatic characteristics of the organization are propagated, gain acceptance and/or are rejected. For the Covenant, or for any organization for that matter, the effect of proselytizing might be to broaden the basis of interaction and, similarly, changes in the boundaries of interaction would tend to affect the breadth of evangelization. The early reliance of the Covenant on Swedish did have the effect of expanding the boundaries of the denomination but only along the narrow corridors of Swedish settlements as will be observed in Chapter 3. However, when it became necessary for the Covenant to switch to English in order to appease its own youth, this whole process had the effect of broadly expanding the entire basis of evangelization. This exemplifies one aspect of the dialectical process through which the Covenant, as an organization, is altered, or in this case, expanded.

Further, it is assumed that corresponding referents of the conceptualizations of identity used here can be located on the organizational level, i.e. that there are operationally definable and researchable units of which "organizational identity" is composed. Dashefsky distinguishes between two modes of individual identity: how the individual defines himself ("subjective" mode) and how the individual is defined by others ("objective" mode). Here one might distinguish between the deliberate and the mechanical properties of organizational identity. The deliberate properties refer to the intentional, set-forth, ascribed-to aspects of identity and correspond to Dashefsky's subjective mode, whereas the mechanical properties, corresponding to the objective mode, concern the involuntary and indirect aspects of identity which follow as a result of certain relations or processes within the organization involving change. These properties might be illustrated by the effect of language on recruitment; a decision by the denomination or the congregation to switch over to the use of English (deliberate property) could have the dual effect of including certain people and excluding others (mechanical property). Though these categories are not necessarily water-tight, they are nevertheless useful, for example, in delineating elements in the dialectical process of organizational change. Using these two distinctions on the organizational level, the categories outlined in Figure 2.2 might aid in arriving at something similar to organizational identity applicable to the Covenant denomination.

Under Social history would be included data relevant to the Covenant from Covenant as well as non-Covenant sources. Information recorded by denominations with which the Covenant has had relations would be included here for example. By Sociological category is meant classical sect-church typologies such as those developed by Yinger (1957) and his predecessors. The Legitimation items stem from various elements within the organization itself. Information of this type would normally not be recorded and preserved except from within the organization. A suggested counterpart to "ego-identity" on the individual level concerns the findings which might result from an in-depth study of the interaction and inter-relatedness of certain vicissitudes within the organization, something of the "inner mechanics" of the organization; that within the organization which outlasts its members: called here the Organization's Soul".

Figure 2.2 Components of Organizational Identity

Mode	Conceptual Level	Empirical Level Covenant Church
Mechanical	Social History	Observations recorded: places, events, names, dates, location, statistics and institutions.
	Sociological Category	Placement in typology of religious organizations: i.e. Cult to Church spectrum.
Deliberate	Legitimation	Goals, theology, general policy, conference decisions and statements on leadership, ministerial and lay levels.
	Organization's "Soul"	The intricate non-cognitive aspects of the organization

These categories are not exclusive; for instance, returning to the example of language, early emphasis on maintenance and preservation of Swedish through the organization of childrens' classes would be considered an intentional and deliberate characteristic of the organization. With the presence of both the English and Swedish segments within one and the same congregation, however, both languages in a sense assume qualities as mechanical properties.

In this study, Covenant identity will be examined by using elements of the Social history and Legitimation categories as they are suggested in Figure 2.2. Obviously, Covenant identity involves more than can be discussed under these headings; however, considering the intention of the study to examine change in Covenant identity over time, it should suffice to isolate certain elements of particular relevance to - and which give an indication of - organizational change. As for the "Sociological Category", it is quite clear that the organization being studied here is of the type "denomination" and an elaboration on the non-cognitive aspects of the organization, its zest or "soul" demand other methods of research than those applied here.

In general, four areas will be considered: statistics, institutions, relations with other organizations and some cultural aspects of the Covenant. The statistics will be analyzed in an effort to determine alterations taking place within the denomination in terms of increase, decrease, geographical distribution and expansion, etc. on a period by period basis. The other three types of data offer insight into 1) the institutions started and maintained by the denomination; and 2) formal relations with other denominations; and 3) Swedish cultural remnants, and will include information of both mechanical and deliberate nature. Examples of such material included in the following analysis are congregational and membership statistics, information on various service institutions, cooperative efforts with other denominations and the language issue.

As for relations with other groups, the Covenant was courted on numerous occasions by other, often larger, denominations and the Covenant itself entertained ideas of possible merger with other groups or organizations. Included here must also be the link with the Mission Covenant in Sweden, which both pre-dates, outweighs and outlasts all other external, formal ties. Consideration of Covenant relations with other denominations not only discloses preferences, but suggests at the same time both a measure of uncertainty and of openness regarding the prospects of remaining independent of or integrating with other groups. This, too, is an important aspect of the denomination's self-conceptualization: its legitimation.

Covenant history is certainly part of the denomination's identity. While no further analytical attention will be given history beyond what was

included in Chapter 1, the analyses of Chapters 3,4 and 5 assume the origins and background biography of the denomination presented in Chapter 1.

2.4 Environment

Environment as a sociological concept is often associated with the study of organizations, especially in reference to what is generally known as the systems approach. The systems approach is a method of analyzing the processes of organizations by relating the parts to the whole. One perspective of this model involves the analysis of the internal processes of organizations whereby the organization is conceived of as a whole in and of its self.

A further development of this model is the attempt to relate the whole to its environment wherein the focus of attention is directed towards something external to and presumably acting upon the organization. Not all systems approaches ascribe equal, if any, significance to the influence of environment. A brief review of different theoretical models will be undertaken in this section.

Much of the debate concerning strategies for studying organizations stems from or centers around the two perspectives suggested above, and developments of them. Gouldner (1959) referred to them as rational- and natural-system models of organization. They are, furthermore, commonly referred to as closed- and open- system models respectively: the former pertaining to the internal inter-dependencies of the organizational processes; the latter dealing with inter-dependent processes vis-à-vis the organization and its environment.

Among others, Emery and Trist (1965), Thompson (1967) and Child (1973) have suggested complements and/or alterations to the systems approach. The following presentation of various forms of systems approaches will be basically patterned after the typology suggested by Emery and Trist. The categories represent four aspects of a systems approach to the study of organizations. It is suggested here that an organization could be studied from the point of view of any one or several of these aspects. A comprehensive approach in the study of organizations, according to Emery and Trist, takes into account all four aspects and their inter-relationships.

Figure 2.3 Systems Approaches

	dependence	interdependence
organization	O	O/e
environment	E/o	E

The symbol "O" represents the organization and "E" the environment. Block letters/small letters indicate positions of interdependency and dependency. Thus, Category O depicts the study of the internal interdependencies of organizational processes, thereby reflecting conditions resembling the closed-systems approach. Categories O/e and E/o both represent open-systems approaches which recognize the existence of interaction between the two entities, the former indicating the predominant role afforded the organization and the latter for which environment is conceptualized as dominant. Category E refers to the interdependencies of the various sectors of the environment itself. This category is developed by Emery and Trist and will be discussed below. First, a concise review of the other three systems models will be undertaken. The bulk of the following account is taken from Child (1972) and Thompson (1967).

To begin with, the closed-systems (O) approach is generally characterized by its narrow focus on the organization as an independent whole, fully comprehensible in and of itself. Within this approach, organizations are conceived of as rational entities, designed to eliminate uncertainty and, thereby, achieve a state of determinateness. According to Thompson, closed-systems approaches are very likely efficiency and performance centered in terms of the organization's goals, producing results in which "...the ingredients of the organization are deliberately chosen for their necessary contribution to a goal, and the structures established are those deliberately intended to attain highest efficiency" (p. 4f). In the closed-system, all action is planned and deliberate, and conceivable environmental influences are controlled and neutralized by the system's inbuilt stabilizing mechanisms, resulting in a completely independent stance of the organization in accounting for structural change.

In an open-systems (O/e, E/o or E) approach, environment becomes a crucial element in understanding structural change and development.

According to Thompson, one of the characteristics of this approach is the element of expectant uncertainty arising out of the perceived distance between the organization and the environment. Both organization and environment are conceived of as specific yet interrelated entities, which gives rise to the question of dependence, independence and interdependence; furthermore, if dependence exists, what is the direction?

The types E/o and O/e represent two plausible strains within open-systems approaches. Beginning with E/o, organization might be conceived of as assuming dependency relative to environment, that is, it assumes an edge in the interplay between the two components. Here, the organization is subjected to unknown external, natural intrusions, in this case, from the environment. Despite this inherent uncertainty, however, the various parts are conceived of as a whole in that efforts to adjust to these uncertainties take place within the system. This process of self-stabilization or homeostasis "...spontaneously, or naturally, governs the necessary relationships among parts and activities and thereby keeps the system viable in the face of disturbances stemming from the environment" (Thompson 1967 p. 7). The outcome of this theoretical model is that contextual or environmental factors determine the organizational structure due to certain restraints that the former impose on the latter.

Child (1972) argues against this (E/o) model primarily on the grounds that due attention is not given the "agency of choice" available to those in charge of the organization. His strategy, which would come under the category O/e, recognizes the location of certain power and control mechanisms over structural processes within organizational confines, and emphasize the role of "strategic choice" rather than external or environmental constraints in understanding these processes.

According to Child, the crucial link to variation in organizational structure is located in the decision-makers' judgment of the organization's place within the environment. Their decisions are important in determining the organization's location, the type of people to be recruited, the clientele it will serve and the ideology it will maintain. In short, it is often they who determine the extent and confines of the organization's environment or "organizational domain" to use the phrase Child adopts, and which comprises the organization's specific goals and the operations necessary for achieving these goals. This illustrates, then, the dominant position of organization over environment in the course of the interaction of the two.

Thus far the discussion has centered around change in organizational structure and the relationship of environment to this change. Emery and Trist's fourth type, E, deals with what they refer to as the "causal texture of environment", and has to do with the inter-connectedness of

various aspects of the environment itself. The overall assumption in view of the systems-approach discussion is that changes occur both within the organization due to environmental influences, and in the environment itself, and that these changes may occur simultaneously. The authors suggest four ideal types of environmental texture differentiated by the degree of complexity and competition in each one. Type 1, the simplest and least complicated, is characterized by a situation of general stability in which goals and means of obtaining them are random and undistinguished. In Type 2, the environment remains stable but somewhat more clustered with the presence of other similar organizations. In this situation there is a separation of strategy and tactics and a tendency towards centralized coordination.

Characteristic of Type 3 is the appearance of several organizations offering similar services to the same clientele, the survival of each organization being related negatively to another. It is necessary for the organizations to develop operations for accomplishing their goals through specific means in order to adjust to the situation. In this dynamic environment, stability rests upon mutual agreement as to certain boundaries and regulations, but may develop even further into Type 4 which is dynamic in yet a further sense. Besides the presence of competing organizations, interaction from the environment at large is felt due, for example, to the implementation of legislative and public regulations, or arising out of the meshing of various other social and/or economic factors. This texture of environment which involves inherent change is referred to as "turbulent fields" and can only be controlled or stabilized through an appeal to certain values which transcend the organization itself. These values, when shared by all members of the field, "provide a control mechanism" necessary for stabilizing the situation and reverting back to a less complicated environmental texture.

According to the authors, the nature of these 4 ideal types is such that all may exist simultaneously in the real world, and any given organization may experience these as successive states of altered environment.

2.5 Covenant Environment

In this study, the Covenant will be viewed from the open-systems perspective whereby the organization is acted upon and influenced by environment. This perspective, as opposed to the closed-systems approach, is warranted not least by the immigrant quality of the organization being studied. Furthermore, the question of the priority of organization over environment

or vice-versa may appear to fluctuate during the course of events; however, the point of departure of this analysis will be the dominant role played by environment over the organization and in perpetuating subsequent changes in organizational identity.

As for the texture of environment as discussed in the previous section, one task in the course of the study will be to determine the complexity of the environment, i.e. changes within the environment itself. In order to observe such changes, the boundaries of the original or initial environment must be defined. In doing so, two possible approaches might be weighed.

A narrow approach would be to define Covenant environment according to the scope of potential recruits, both geographically and culturally. This might be referred to as the "real" or "actual" boundary and would have the effect of limiting environment to Swedish-speaking people in selected areas of America. A broad approach, on the other hand, would include within "environment" even the groups, organizations and denominations with which the Covenant had relations. In the formative years, using a broad definition, even certain English-speaking peoples would be included, as would other Scandinavian bodies including the Covenant in Sweden.

Considering, however, that the environment provided the Covenant with more than just potential members (see Section 2.6), a broad definition of the boundary of Covenant environment will be utilized herein, without this necessarily contradicting the actual or real boundary of recruitment being limited to Swedish-speaking people. Further, as will be suggested in the following section, a broad definition of Covenant environment is vital in understanding the source of changes brought about within the Covenant and which affected the narrow confines of potential recruits.

The open-systems approach used in this study will be a combination of Categories E/o and E, which will allow for the examination both of changes occurring within the organization and influenced by the environment, as well as alterations in the structure of the environment itself.

2.6 The Relationship of Identity to Environment

The relationship of environment to organizational identity might be illustrated by enlarging on the interconnection between individual identity and organizational identity suggested earlier. In the dialectical process through which individual identity is gained, society assumes an overarching position. Society functions as the stage on which the psychological reality of the individual is not only defined but created (Berger 1966 p. 108). In

like manner, and in accordance with the priority afforded environment in the discussion above, environment serves as the arena in which the organization (Covenant) is constituted, maintained and developed. This maintenance and development applies to the various aspects of Covenant identity as outlined in Figure 2.2

The central issue to be addressed in this study is change in Covenant identity over time. Identity assumes the character of the dependent variable and environment, the independent variable. Given this relationship, what is the result of the influence of environment over the organization? The object will be to follow the course of the Covenant as the boundaries of the denomination are expanded beyond the narrow confines of its immigrant beginnings.

H. Stout (1975) describes the development of ethnic² religion in America in three successive phases of membership expansion. Phase 1 is called the "immigrant phase" "...in which the ethnic group (is) centered around an amalgam of ecclesiastical and national origins." (p.207) Exemplifying this phase using the early American Puritans, Stout suggests that the guiding principle was not so much to spread gospel to the world as it was to keep the ethnic solidarity of the group intact. In Phase 2, the membership of Phase 1 is expanded: "...allegiance is no longer introverted and centered around the immigrant group, but it expands to embrace various groups..." (p.211), resulting in a clustering around "Protestant-Catholic-Jew-Black" demarcations (Phase 2), each one seeking to assert its dominance in the face of the others and ensure solidarity. The further development of this phase, though not yet realized according to Stout, leads to "culture or civil religion" (Phase 3), in which the boundaries are expanded, the Protestant-Catholic-Jew-Black clustering giving way to a national religion (The American Way of Life), characterized by its "individual pragmatism, materialism, faith in progress through technology and nationalism" (p. 214).

The extent to which Stout's typology is relevant to changes taking place within the Covenant will be discussed in conjunction with the examination of each of the three periods of the denomination's history.

2.7 Source Material

The single most important source of material for this study is the Covenant Yearbook (Årsberättelsen prior to 1932), hereafter referred to as the Yearbook. First published in 1885, the Yearbook contains accounts of the proceedings of the Annual Convention of delegates from the congregations

and, later on, from various institutions as they became organized. Although the character of the reports has varied over time, the general pattern has held throughout the decades. Among the contents are included reports from and concerning institutions, foreign and domestic mission undertakings, committees, the individual conferences as well as financial statements, minutes of the annual meetings and congregational statistics. The Yearbook has appeared annually under separate cover except for the years 1896 and 1897, when due to financial circumstances, the contents were published in the church paper Missions Vännen.

Most of the material of non-statistical nature comes from the committee reports, reports submitted by Covenant institutions and from the various resolutions adopted at the annual conventions. Here would be included progress reports from committees dealing with relations with other denominations and petitions from congregations seeking membership in the Covenant as well as those wishing to withdraw their membership.

The first statistical records for the organization appeared as an appendix to the 1890 Yearbook. Although somewhat incomplete in the beginning, congregational-level data were listed for most of the 79 registered congregations, including entries for membership, communicants, baptisms, Sunday-school, day-school, as well as for size, type and monetary value of the buildings, total assets and the names of each congregation's teacher and chairman. The statistics for the first 20 years are irregular, and are recorded for the years 1890 to 1895, 1900, and then from 1904 on, except for 1906, 1912 and 1917. From 1927 on, the membership entries are complete for all congregations registered under the Covenant with few exceptions. For the figures prior to this time adjustments need to be made to compensate for the inconsistent and poor keeping of records.

Not all the original record entries have been maintained over the years; those showing most stability include name of congregation, membership, Sunday-school, youth work and contributions. Recently, more attention has been given membership turnover and type of turnover on the congregational level.

Other sources for material of statistical nature include several studies conducted under the auspices of the Covenant and reports published outside the organization but based on information gathered from within. Of the former, there is a study of age distribution in 301 Covenant churches based on information gathered in a 1941 survey conducted by John E. Kullberg. As far as could be ascertained, this is the only survey of its type conducted for the denomination as a whole. Other studies include a 1966 self-study of the Central Conference, with information on religious activity and general demographical material, but, as indicated, limited to this one conference. A 1976 study, a sampling of the entire denomination,

stratified by type of congregation (rural, urban) and by conference, includes material from 46 congregations. Unfortunately, few of the results of this study are of interest for the present study. Age and sex distributions can be extracted from the results and compared to these distributions from earlier studies.

In 1906, 1916, 1926 and 1936, the United States Bureau of Census published special reports of Religious Bodies. While the figures reported here are based on information received from the various denominations, in the case of the Covenant, and especially for the two latest reports, are included which are not reported elsewhere concerning Covenant congregation and membership distributions by rural and urban location, and distribution by sex. For comparative purposes, information from various Scandinavian Evangelical Bodies are included under the same heading in these U. S. Federal reports.

Other documents include individual recordings of events or items related to the Covenant both from within and external to the denomination. Here are included early progress reports of cooperation between the Congregationalists and the Covenant from both sides, and later reports of similar nature.

Two surveys were conducted within the framework of this project and will be briefly described in Chapter 5, along with the results which pertain to Chapter 5.

3.0 Period I: 1885-1930

3.1 Introduction

Period I covers the first 45 years of the Covenant, beginning in 1885 with SEMCo's formation and ending in 1930, the year prior to the switch-over to English. As described in Chapter 1, the period is characterized by heavy concentrations of Swedish immigrants in certain parts of the United States. While the onset of the Swedish emigration to America pre-dates SEMCo by several decades, the end of Period I coincides with the cessation of wide-scale immigration in America and the end of the in-flux of an important source of members for immigrant religious groups such as SEMCo. Various aspects of SEMCo's organizational development and geographical location and expansion will be examined in this chapter in order to ascertain what changes the denomination underwent during this period and how it was affected by environmental factors.

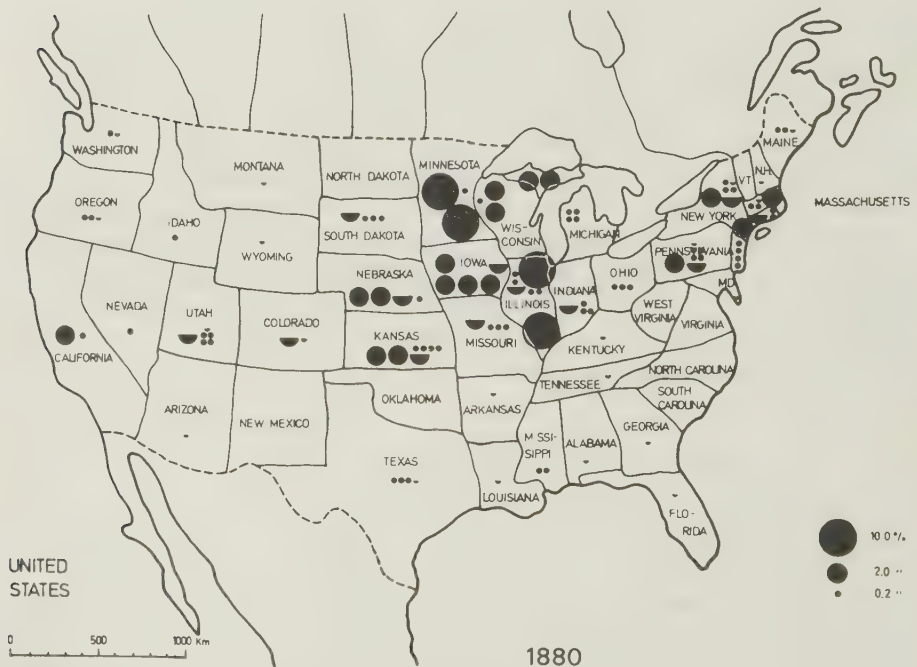
3.2 Settlement Preferences

By 1885, when SEMCo was founded, some 400,000 persons had already emigrated from Sweden to America and another 600,000 were yet to arrive and settle there. With few exceptions, the early immigrants settled in two specific regions of the United States: in the Midwest and in the Northeast. In 1880, the vast majority (76%) of the Swedish-born population in the United States was located in the following midwest states: Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri; (see Figure 3.1).

By 1900, a shift in distribution had occurred so that some of the Western states were included (Norman 1974). On the West coast, Washington and Oregon showed substantial increases in Swedish population while Iowa and Kansas experienced comparable losses. Around the turn of the century, large migrations took place to the West from central and eastern states.

However, the losses were compensated for by the continual arrival of new immigrants. Two states, Illinois and Minnesota alone, accounted for 42 percent of the Swedish population in 1880, and 37 percent in 1900, while still showing increases in absolute figures for the same period of time, which is a further indication of the increasing distribution of the Swedish population in the United States (see Nelson 1943).

Figure 3.1. The Distribution of the Swedish-Born Population in the United States: 1880



Source: Runblom/Norman (1976) and sources listed there.
(Used with permission)

A comparison of Swedish immigrant settlement preferences (Figure 3.1) with the location of SEMCo congregations (see Table 3.5), shows a close similarity of the two, as could be expected, with reference to both geographical expansion and numerical intensity. However, despite this natural

relationship, there are no immediate indications as to how this came about. On the one hand, the similarities could depend upon a fairly constant share of Mission Friends among the immigrants to all areas of settlement, an explanation supported by the heavy concentration of Mission Friends in those areas of Sweden with the highest levels of emigration (see Carlsson 1976 and Olsson 1962). On the other hand, the similarities might be attributable to the early mission efforts of SEMCo in the preference settlement areas. Whereas the first explanation emphasizes the role of the emigration, the second option would render the congregational development and expansion pattern more a deliberate act of the newly established denomination in America. Clearly, both aspects are vital in understanding SEMCo's early development. While there are no easily obtainable records of the number of Mission Friends among the Swedish emigrants, the activities of SEMCo in reaching these and other Swedes settled in America are well documented and will be dealt with later in this chapter.

Table 3.1 Gatherings of Mission Friends and SEMCo Congregations:
1888

	Congrs. SEMCo		Stat-	Congrs. SEMCo		Stat-
	1888	ions		1888	ions	
Maine	1	0	Indiana	5	2	3
New Hampshire	1	0	Michigan	9	6	25
Vermont	1	1	Illinois	30	15	25
Massachussets	7	1	Iowa	35	10	18
Connecticut	10	22	Wisconsin	10	4	15
Rhode Island	3	4	Minnesota	55	13	110
New York	5	5	Dakota	3		10
Pennsylvania	6	22	Missouri	5		5
Ohio	1	0	Kansas	10	5	15
			Nebraska	15	7	15
TOTALS				212	63	305

Source: Montgomery 1888 and Covenant Yearbook 1890.

The Mission Friends movement in America was not confined to SEMCo congregations but included many independent congregations as well as congregations belonging to other denominations. Furthermore, not all Friends were organized into formal congregations or "churches". Mission stations or preaching stations, under the leadership of itinerant pastors, cropped up in many places where there existed but a handful of families. An early inventory of both formal and informal gatherings of Mission Friends was undertaken by the American Home Missionary Society, a Congregationalist-supported association with an interest in the Mission Friends. Society superintendent, M. W. Montgomery, who had travelled extensively in Scandinavia and who had learned the Swedish language, worked towards uniting the Mission Friends with the Congregationalists (Walan 1963). His account of the Swedish mission congregations is presented in Table 3.1, along with the number of 1888 SEMCo congregations (for comparative purposes) presumably included in the inventory.

According to Table 3.1, SEMCo congregations accounted for just under one-third of all mission congregations in 1888. With two exceptions, Massachusetts and Manitoba, Canada, SEMCo's 1888 boundaries were limited to several midwest states wherein were located three-fourths of the Swedish population in the United States, and four-fifths of all mission congregations.

Of the states with a 1890 Swedish-born population of at least 10,000 (Nelson 1943), only two, California and Washington, had no Mission, according to Table 3.1. However, according to the roster of congregations in the Covenant Yearbook (1930), at least 4 congregations existed in California and Washington prior to or around 1888. Several more were organized in the years following, which indicates the likelihood of the existence of preaching stations here also.

3.2.2 Chicago as the Center

The meeting in 1885 at which representatives of the two synods and of the independent congregations gathered to, as it turned out, to organize the Covenant (see Chapter 1.4.2) was held in Chicago. This city was to function as the denominational headquarters from the very beginning. Chicago seemed a natural choice as home base for the Covenant for a variety of reasons. From the point of view of the denomination, and in addition to the fact that the Covenant was both conceived and organized here, 11 of the original

46 congregations were situated in Illinois, and of these 11, 5 were located in Chicago. Furthermore, of the 46 congregations in 1885, all but one were located in an 8-state area including and surrounding the state of Illinois. Within this same area nearly 476,000 Swedish-born (including off-spring) resided in 1890 (Nelson 1943). No doubt, equally attractive was the abundance of independent Mission congregations in this area, many of which later joined SEMCo (see Section 4.4.1). By the end of the period, 209 of the 280 SEMCo congregations, comprising 67 percent of the SEMCo membership, were situated within this 8-state area with Chicago as its organizational nucleus (see Table 3.5).

From the point of view of the city, and in consideration of the vast number of Swedish immigrants settling there at least temporarily (Beijbom 1971), SEMCo had all reason to expect a good reception. In 1900, the Swedish population of Chicago, including all Swedish-born and their off-spring, totalled nearly 145,000. Stockholm, Sweden was the only city with a larger Swedish population at the time. Although the Swedish population in Chicago decreased in the following years mainly due to westward migrations, the city early on gained a reputation as the economic and cultural center (including many religious and secular organizations and associations) of Swedish-Americans, and as the "traffic center and redistributor of the Swedish immigrants to the Middle West" (Beijbom 1971 p. 9).

The proportion of Mission Friends among the religiously active Swedes in Chicago was small (2 percent) in 1880, and their composition exhibited some basic dissimilarities with other Swedish religious groups, in particular the Augustinian Lutherans, and with the Chicago Swedish population in general (Beijbom 1972). Furthermore, the social structure of the Mission Friends (from 1868-1880) in Chicago is characterized by Beijbom as less family oriented (fewer children, more 20-49 year-olds) and more female dominated (175 women per 100 men). Thus, in Chicago during the 1870's,

the typical Mission Friend was a young, newly-arrived unmarried woman, probably of very simple social and economic circumstances. One can assume that the Mission prayer houses were the first large female-dominated organizations of the Swedes in Chicago (ibid p. 188).

3.3 Religious Groups Interested in the Swedish Immigrants

As was discussed in Chapter 1, the Swedish immigrants brought with them various religious strains in more or less organized forms. Besides the relatively small, short-lived groups of religious adherents whose activities were limited locally, several denominations with roots going back to Sweden emerged out of the activities of the early immigrants. Within several of the more organized of these groups, intensive efforts were made to win over their fellow patriots arriving in great flocks as well as those who had already settled and belonged to other denominations¹.

At least one of these contenders was an established American denomination which succeeded in attracting a large number of Mission congregations both in Mid-western and Eastern states (Olsson 1962 p. 335).

Of the Swedish denominations in existence upon the founding of SEMCo in 1885, the Augustana Synod was by far the largest and most wide-spread. Having organized into a synod in 1860, the denomination increased from 60 congregations and a "confirmed" membership of 5,507 in 1860, to 1,227 congregations and 238,000 members by 1930. The 1860 congregations were located in much the same territory as SEMCo. All who had been baptized into the Church of Sweden were accepted as members in Augustana, a practice which was criticized by the "free-religious" groups. According to the latter groups, who deliberately took a stand against the Swedish state religion, Augustana served merely as the extended arm of the Church of Sweden in America.

Compared to Augustana, whose aim was to serve the broad majority of Swedish immigrants without placing demands upon them, SEMCo, the second largest group with Swedish origins, made membership conditional upon a personal experience of salvation. Of the Swedish denominations, Augustana was the only one with open membership. Another group, known later as the Swedish Evangelical Free Church (hereafter referred to as the "Free"), which traces its origins to 1884, existed initially as a loose contingent of independent mission congregations. Ideologically, they resembled SEMCo in almost every respect except for the matter of the legitimization of organization. To the Free, formal organization was not supported in the Bible and therefore not to be practiced. This argument was used freely against SEMCo in efforts to entice away SEMCo members and to convince independent congregations not to join SEMCo. The Free later established headquarters in Chicago and eventually built up an organization of their own (Olsson 1982).

A third denomination to contend actively for the Swedish Mission Friends, was the American Congregationalists. The Swedish congregations which joined this group were referred to as the Swedish Congregationalists; however, whether the bond between the Swedish congregations and the denomination extended much beyond a formal name for the Swedish churches is sometimes difficult to determine (Walan 1963 p. 105f). Neither is there an apparent difference in ideology though there was disagreement on the subject between the leaders of the American and Swedish Covenants (ibid p. 102ff). The Swedish Congregationalist congregations were highly independent of the organization. But the factor which no doubt was responsible for the attractiveness of the Congregationalists was their willingness to support the smaller, struggling, Swedish (as well as other nationals) pioneer groups in several ways (ibid). First, in return for joining the denomination, the Swedes were offered the means to build a church; furthermore, they were furnished with pastoral training facilities to educate their own pastors, and support was even promised to allow individual congregations pastors of their own (Olsson 1962 p. 335). The Congregationalists took the opportunity to work among the Swedish- and other- Mission Friends seriously. They even sent representatives to Scandinavia to study the religious situation and learn the Swedish language in order to return and carry on mission work among the Swedes in America.

By the end of Period I, some of the Eastern Swedish Mission congregations had joined SEMCo but it is unclear how many of these belonged to the Congregationalists. At the beginning of Period 2, the records of the American Congregationalists included 60 "Swedish-speaking" congregations (Congregational Yearbook 1935). This is somewhat less than the number of Eastern Missionary Association (an association of Mission congregations in the East under the Congregationalists) congregations included in the Covenant Yearbook for 1930 listed as "associated" congregations.

Two further denominations should be mentioned in connection here although they were both relatively small and local in comparison to those mentioned above. The Swedish Baptists, who organized in 1852, became a part of the Baptist General Conference in 1879. They operated a pastors' training school in Evanston, Illinois, and carried on local evangelization work and foreign missions.

The Swedish Methodists were organized as a denomination in 1877. They had their own hospital and mission and operated a training school for pastors in Illinois. Their membership never reached more than approx. 25,000 before being incorporated as a part of the United Methodist Church in 1943.²

Of the six denominations, three were very similar to each other at least on the congregational level: SEMCo, the Free and the Swedish Congregationalists. This is attested to, for example, by the ease with which congregations from the one could transfer to the other, something which occurred rather frequently judging from the comments of the leaders and from the statistics.

3.4 SEMCo's Early Identity and Environment

The identity of the organization at this early stage is determined by its national roots and by its establishment among a particular ethnic group. As has been seen thus far, early on, SEMCo was firmly anchoring its base among Swedish immigrants in several midwest states and its center in Chicago. Initially, the denomination represented 46 congregations of Mission Friends, and by 1890 the number had grown to 79 congregations with an estimated membership of 8,600 (CQ May 1943 p. 31).

The organization's early identity was further consolidated by the position taken in reference to two questions asked at the constitutive meeting of the two synods out of which SEMCo emerged. The first questions up for discussion concerned 1) "...whether or not it was proper for Christian congregations to unite... and the grounds for such a union", and 2) "...how to achieve a brotherly union among our believing fellow patriots here in America... on a Christian and practical basis" (Protocol 1885 p. 4ff).

By a majority vote in favor, the first question was answered in the affirmative and courses of action were suggested and steps taken to achieve the desired union of believing Swedes in America; SEMCo was to be a consolidation of religious bodies.

From the point of view of this study, the second question is of particular interest because of its deliberate and delineating nature. On the one hand, it focuses the attention and interests of the organization singularly towards one ethnic group. And on the other hand, the aim is narrowed even more to "believing" as opposed to the more "folkly" character of the Augustinian Lutherans. The idea of membership based on belief and not baptism did not necessarily have a familiar clang among the majority of Swedish immigrants who, to the extent that they participated in religious activities, probably felt more comfortable with the familiarity represented by the Lutheran liturgy considering their status as immigrants in a strange land. Thus, the focus of SEMCo, already limited to a specific nationality,

became further restricted by the denomination's confessional freedom in an arena dominated by potential members not used to this concept of religious freedom.

SEMCo's initial environment is characterized by the presence of large contingents of Swedish settlers (Figure 3.1), by several hundreds of congregations and preaching stations comprised of sympathizers of the Mission Friends movement (Table 3.1), and by the presence of other, mainly Swedish denominations which contended for the loyalties of their fellow countrymen (see Section 3.2). The gatherings of Mission Friends were perhaps a more vital aspect of SEMCo environment due to the confessional-freedom element of SEMCo identity.

The remainder of Chapter 1 will be devoted to looking at how SEMCo set about to develop organizationally within its environment which generally remained quite constant throughout the period. This examination will be done first of all with the help of denominational and congregational statistics which offer insights into the denomination's location, expansion and growth pattern in both space and time, and followed by a look at some of SEMCo's activities in the area of institutions and relations with other religious organizations and some cultural features of the denominations, all of which constitute vital aspects of SEMCo's identity.

3.5 Statistics for Period I

3.5.1 Congregation and Membership Statistics

The earliest congregational statistics appear in the 1890 Covenant Year-book, five years after the organization of SEMCo. Among the categories listed for the congregations are the following: year of organization, name of congregation, members accepted, members moved, deaths, expelled, communicants, child baptisms, total of adults and children, Sunday-school attendance, Christian instruction classes, congregational week-day school pupils and weeks of instruction, contributions to different causes, items related to church property such as year of construction, type, size and value of building indebtedness, and pastor's and chairman's names. Perhaps due to the incompleteness of the information for many of the categories and the rather large number of congregations not reporting, efforts to collect data for most of the categories listed here were later abandoned. For most of Period I, the items recorded with relative consistency include year of

organization, membership, youth activity and Sunday-school attendance.

The item appearing most consistently for all 45 years of Period I is the listing of congregations being accepted into the denomination. The primary reason for these names being recorded on a consistent basis is that acceptance was subject to majority vote of the delegates gathered at the annual convention. These congregations were recorded in the minutes of the proceedings, and, until 1914, only those congregations with formal membership were included in the matriculation lists. SEMCo's policy was to accept as formal member congregations, independent congregations, associations of congregations, and associations of individuals otherwise connected to the Covenant such as women's groups and ministerial associations. In 1914, it was decided to include even the names of congregations belonging to SEMCo's regional associations. With the admittance of one such association, the Eastern Missionary Society (EMS) in 1921, the number of Covenant congregations increased by 60 to 70 congregations.

It is essential to note in the following discussion (and of figures referred to in the discussion) the distinction between member congregations and associate-member congregations³. In Table 3.2, the formal member congregations are represented by columns 1 and 4. Associate member congregations are included in columns 2 and 6. Column 4 is the number of congregations listed minus the associate congregations and any withdrawals. Since congregational withdrawals were seldom recorded separately, this can only be calculated by using columns 4 and 5. Congregations were stricken from the lists largely for one of three reasons: through formal withdrawal often to join another denomination, because the congregation simply died out, or due to a merger of congregations.

The membership figures for Period I were generally reported only sporadically and are therefore highly incomplete. For the early part of the period, as few as one-third of the congregations reported membership figures to the central office in Chicago. There are, however, exceptions to this. In 1900, mainly due to the event of the National Census, figures from 90 percent of the congregations are recorded. Using these figures and similarly reliable congregational statistics recorded for the years 1910, 1920 and 1930, fairly representative membership figures can be calculated on a congregational and national basis. These are represented in Column 6 of Table 3.2 for these years along with average congregational membership. Membership figures for congregations not reporting for 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930 are estimated in Column 6 by using the statistics of the closest following year. The method of making a calculation for the missing congregations on the basis of averages determined by the reports of the congregations results in a highly skewed figure due to the high percentage of small congregations for which figures are not reported.

Table 3.2 SEMCo Congregations: 1885 - 1930

Year	1. Congrs. Added	2. Congrs Listed	3. Assoc. Congrs.	4. Member Congrs. Netto	5. Accum. Total	6. Membership Estimates (Avg.)	7. Joined Within 2 Years of Organization*
1885	46	46		46	46		1
1886	13	59		59	59		4
1887	1	60		60	60		1
1888	4	64		64	64		2
1889	10	74		74	74		6
1890	5	79		79	79		1
1891	11	89		89	90		1
1892	18	107		107	108		1
1893	10	116		116	118		0
1894	6	121		121	124		1
1895	8	128		128	132		1
1896	5	128		128	137		1
1897	5	130		130	142		1
1898	6	137		137	148		2
1899	6				154		2
1900	7	145		145	161	11,983	1
1901	12	157		157	173	(83)	2
1902	6	163		163	179		0
1903	14	176		177	193		5
1904	2	180		180	195		2
1905	4				199		1
1906	5	189		189	206		1
1907	6	194		194	210		1
1908	8	201		201	218		1
1909	8	204		204	226		4
1910	7	209		209	233	18,429	0
1911	6	217		217	239	(88)	1
1912	8				247		3
1913	3	225		225	250		0
1914	4	231		231	254		0
1915	5	261	27	234	259		1
1916	5	271	29	242	264		1
1917	6	286	36	250	270		0
1918	2	296	46	250	272		1
1919	2	305	51	254	274		0
1920	4	302	50	252	278	28,760	0
1921	3	305	50	255	281	(114)	0
1922	5	307	46	261	286		0
1923	10	319	49	270	296		3
1924	4	325	55	270	300		0
1925	3	402	130	272	303		0
1926	4	403	135	268	307		1
1927	2	401	135	266	309		0
1928	2	403	135	268	311		0
1929	3	407	129	278	314		1
1930	1	408	128	280	315	41,829	0
						(149)	
Total: 315							55

*The object of this column is to determine which congregations might have joined SEMCo upon being established as congregations.

3.5.3 The Starting of Congregations

In the previous section it was noted that very few congregations joined SEMCo immediately upon their inception. As age is an important aspect of identity, it might be asked just when SEMCo congregations got started. The frequencies of starts for until the end of Period I are presented in Table 3.3 in 5-year spans.

Table 3.3 Year of Organization:
1930 SEMCo Congregations

Years	Congs. Started	Year	Congs. Started
-1869	4	1900-04	24
1870-74	15	1905-09	24
1875-79	25	1910-14	16
1880-84	34	1915-19	2
1885-89	52	1920-24	5
1890-94	52	1925-30	3
1895-99	19	Missing	5
		Totals	280

According to Table 3.3, 78 congregations which were organized prior to the founding of SEMCo later joined the denomination, but the majority of 1930 member congregations were established following 1885 despite the presence of over 500 mission congregations and stations already in 1888 (see Table 3.1). A comparison of the results of this table to the emigration figures for approximately the same period (Table 1.1) shows that the 1930 SEMCo congregations were founded at a rate somewhat in line with the emigration from Sweden in terms of highs, lows, onset and termination, without there necessarily being a relation between the arrival of emigrants and proportion of Mission Friends among the arrivals. Already by 1894, 182 of the total of 280 had been started. The curve for congregation starts is not sensitive to earlier increases and drops in emigration figures, which might be an indication of a higher percentage of Mission Friend sympathizers among the early arrivals, who set out to organize themselves in congrega-

tions or gatherings.

According to Montgomery (1888; Table 3.1), there were already 177 Mission Friends congregations in the Midwest by 1888. Assuming the accuracy of these figures, as many as 118 of these 177 could have been listed under SEMCo by 1930. Towards the end of Period I, the number of starts sank drastically - only 10 were organized between 1915 and 1930. At the end of the period, the earliest established SEMCo congregations were already some 60 years old.

3.5.3 Congregational Enlistments

Between 1885 and 1930, a total of 315 congregations formally joined the denomination (Table 3.2 Column 5). Nearly half (161) of these had joined already by the turn of the century. The five-year period with the largest number of increases (1885 excluded) was between 1889 and 1893, when 54 congregations were added. The span of least increase came at the end of the period, with only 12 congregations joining in the last 5 years. These two 5-year spans are indicative of the overall trend for the denomination; the number of newly enlisted congregations diminished as the period wore on. An event which seems to have had some influence on the enlistment of congregations is the location of the denomination's annual convention. For 9 years (1889, '95, '96, 1903, '06, '11, '17, '21 and '23), often as many as half or more of the congregations joining were from the state which hosted the convention.

As has already been indicated, many congregations and gatherings of Mission Friends existed prior to the founding of SEMCo. The earliest such congregations got started in 1868. A comparison of Table 3.2 (Column 7) and Table 3.3 shows that very few congregations actually joined SEMCo within two years of inception. This is particularly the case until 1914, after which the congregations getting started, though few in number, tended to join upon inception. For the 10-year period immediately proceeding the organization of SEMCo, 104 congregations -which by 1930 were member congregations- are reported as having gotten under way. Of these 104, only 18 had joined within 2 years of organizing.

In reflecting on the reasons for the time span between the organizing of congregations and joining SEMCo, several things such as SEMCo's relatively late entrance as a denomination and the limited capacity of the newly started organization to aid small congregations in comparison to, for example, the Congregationalists might be considered. Another factor is

certainly the role of the Swedish press (Olsson 1962 p. 331f). At the same time, however, there was perhaps no immediate need or particular advantage to joining any denomination. Cooperation took place without formal ties as is indicated by the fact that many congregations outside SEMCo supported the denomination through financial contributions. During the years immediately following the start of SEMCo, between 6 and 17 percent of all contributions to the denomination came from as many as 15 states (and from Sweden) in which SEMCo had no formal representation (YB86:10; YB90:20; YB91:21; YB93:25).

Beginning in 1915, the names of associate member congregations appear together with member congregations (Column 3). These included Mission Friends gatherings connected to SEMCo through regional conferences which qualified them for associate-member status.

At the end of the period, 408 congregations were included on SEMCo's roster, 128 of which were associate-member and 280 formal member-congregations. These latter had a membership of just under 32,000, for an average of 114 members per congregation. During the period, some 36 congregation were taken from the roster for whatever reason.

3.5.4 Congregational Size

For the years for which fairly complete statistics are available, it is possible to determine the relative size-spread of the denomination on the congregational level as is presented in Table 3.4 below. The figures included here are for the years 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930. Values for congregations not reporting figures are taken from subsequent reports of the nearest following year. The figures are of members per congregation; no such figures can be presented for years prior to 1900 due to inconsistent and incomplete reporting.

A 1926 census of SEMCo congregations and membership distinguishes between urban and rural congregations (Religious Bodies 1926). According to this survey, which includes member and associate-member congregations alike, the average membership of rural congregations was 51 and the corresponding figure for urban congregations stood at 163. Furthermore, the survey shows that 54 percent of all congregations were rural and comprised 27 percent of the denominational membership, while 46 percent of the congregations and 73 percent of the membership were urban.

Table 3.4 Member Congregations by Size: 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

Year	1-25 n. (%)	26-50 n. (%)	51-100 n. (%)	101-200 n. (%)	201-500 n. (%)	500- n. (%)	Total n.* (%)
1900	37 (26)	45 (31)	29 (20)	18 (12)	8 (6)	4 (3)	145 (101)
1910	40 (19)	60 (29)	53 (25)	27 (13)	18 (9)	6 (3)	209 (101)
1920	58 (23)	51 (20)	51 (20)	42 (17)	31 (12)	7 (3)	252 (100)
1930	62 (22)	63 (23)	54 (19)	50 (18)	37 (13)	9 (3)	280 (99)

*Missing congregations included in the totals: 1900 4(3%), 1910 6(3%), 1920 12(5%) and 1930 5(2%).

A breakdown of Table 3.4 into rural and urban classifications similar to the 1926 census would most nearly correspond to a differentiation between congregations of 100 members or less and those having more than 100 members.⁴ Following this division, a slight and gradual shift occurs in the urban-rural distribution of the denomination over the 30-year period. The predominately rural distribution of the Covenant decreases in relative terms from 77 percent in 1900 to 66 percent in 1930. The decrease occurs in the number of congregations with 50 members or less. A corresponding increase can be seen of the proportion of congregations with between 101 and 500 members.

A comparison of this shift to average congregational membership for the same period and to the frequency of additions (Table 3.2) shows that between 1900 and 1910, when 65 congregations were added, the average membership gained by only 5 members; between 1910 and 1920, with 48 congregations being added, the average membership increased by 26; and between 1920 and 1930, when 41 congregations joined, there was an increase in average congregational membership by 35 members.

The extent to which these increases are due to congregational growth or are a result of the enlistment of congregations is difficult to determine because of inconsistent statistics reports. However, a review of the membership figures for Illinois and Minnesota suggests that the smaller, rural congregations (especially those of 50 or less members) remained stable (no category change) with slight tendencies towards both increase and decrease, whereas the majority of the urban congregations showed increases and category change with only slight stability tendencies. For both states, newly enlisted congregations seem to fall into all size

categories with approximately the same distribution as applies to the denomination overall. Assuming that the Illinois and Minnesota congregations combined are representative for the denomination as a whole, it is suggested here that increases in all size categories are to a greater extent the result of incoming congregations and to a lesser degree due to membership increases and the upwards movement of congregations from one category to another.

Table 3.5 Associated Congregations by Size: 1920, 1930.

	0-25	26-50	51-100	101-200	201-500	500-	Total
	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n.* (%)
1920	6 (12)	19 (39)	11 (22)	7 (14)	2 (4)	0 (0)	49 (99)
1930	19 (16)	29 (34)	29 (24)	21 (17)	11 (9)	1 (0)	122 (100)
EMS							
1930	4 (6)	21 (31)	18 (27)	15 (22)	9 (13)		67 (99)

*Missing congregations included in total: 1920 5(10%), 1930 5(4%), 1930 EMS 1 (1%).

The figures in Table 3.4 above include only formal member congregations of SEMCo. The associated congregations, which were recorded first in 1915, are represented in Table 3.5 for the respective years. Here, the congregations of 25 members and less are relatively fewer compared with the member congregations in Table 3.4 above. Upwards of 60 percent of the congregations are located in the 26-50 and 51-100 categories. The 69 associate-member congregations of the Eastern Missionary Society (also included in the 1930 figures in Table 3.5) are on the whole much larger than for both other associate-member and member congregations.

An explanation for the fewer "under 25" associated congregations might be found in a general tendency on the part of smaller congregations to join established denominations and receive financial aid and other support from them which the small groups themselves are incapable of furnishing. While the extent to which this might be true is difficult to determine from the available information, requests from poorer and smaller congregations for financial help and for pastors is well documented in the proceedings of the Covenant annual conventions (see Covenant Yearbooks) and elsewhere (Olsson 1962 p. 334ff; Walen 1963 p. 103ff).

3.6 The Regional Distribution of Congregations

As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, SEMCo was actually the last of several denominations of Swedish background and/or with interests in the religious well-being of the Swedish immigrants to organize. Three of these denominations, including SEMCo, competed for the loyalties of Mission Friends whether organized in independent congregations or belonging to another denomination. The situation around 1885 was such that SEMCo could organize 46 congregations together within a fairly limited geographical area in 8 midwest states and one on the East Coast: Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Massachusetts. Aided by the many travelling representatives and preachers of SEMCo, and not in the least by the extensive travels of P. P. Waldenström and other visiting pastors from Sweden (see Section 3.9.1), the denomination expanded its stronghold in the Midwest, gained a stronger grip in the East but carried on intensive evangelistic efforts particularly in the Western regions as the settlers migrated West.

The description of the pattern of expansion and growth as a whole might be aided by dividing the states into regions. The central or Core region comprises the initial boundaries of SEMCo in the Midwest; the Western region is composed of the states not included in the Core region which lie in the western half of the United States and the Canadian provinces; the Eastern region includes, in essence, all other states (the East), and particularly the Northeastern states of the Eastern Missionary Society. The regions would then include the following states:

Core Region: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota,
Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri

Western Region: Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho,
Wyoming, Texas, N. and S. Dakota and Canada

Eastern Region: Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, New Jersey,
Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island,
Massachusetts, Vermont, Florida and Alabama.

In Tables 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8, each of the regions as outlined will be considered in terms of the number of member and associate-member congregations on a state-by-state basis and at intervals of five years.

Table 3.6 Core Region Congregations by State: Five-year Intervals 1885 to 1930.*

State	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930
Illinois	11	17	25	26	28	33	33/7	37/4	40/2	40/2
Michigan	5	7	10	14	19	21	24/1	24/4	25/4	22/7
Indiana	1	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
Wisconsin	1	5	6	9	10	12	13/1	15/1	16/2	14/3
Minnesota	6	19	30	34	54	60	63	67/2	69/9	76/9
Iowa	9	12	20	20	23	23	23	21/1	20/2	18/2
Kansas	5	5	6	6	6	6	8/11	9/14	14/10	15/9
Nebraska	7	8	13	11	11	12	12/1	16/6	15/7	18/3
Missouri								1	1	1
Totals	46	76	113	124	155	171	180/21	194/32	204/36	209/35

*The second number in the columns starting from 1915 represents associated congregations.

Expansion within the Core region follows in general an even pattern; the states with a high representation of congregations in 1890 maintain this position (except in Iowa) and the states with fewer congregations in 1890 have relatively fewer also at the end of the period. Seven of the Core states show at least 15 congregations at one point during the 45-year period, the same seven with the highest percentage of Swedish-born population of all Midwest states (see Figure 3.1). Of the two least represented states, Indiana's SEMCo congregations are situated in the Northwest portion of the state, in the same general proximity of many Illinois congregations, and Missouri's single congregation appears first in the 1920 figures. The states having the greatest increases in absolute numbers are Illinois and Minnesota, with the former showing a net increase from 11 to 40 member congregations and the latter an increase from 6 to 70 by 1930. These two states combined account for 60 percent of the increase for the Central region. Although it can be expected that the states with the largest

concentration of Swedish immigrants account for the greatest net increases, there is a fundamental difference in the composition of the congregations in these two states as will be discussed shortly. Between 1925 and 1930, the rate of congregations joining is at the lowest level for the entire period. During the same interval, 3 states actually loose congregations (net loss), 4 gain and 2 remain stable. At the most, 36 associate member congregations are listed for this region, many of which later became formal members (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.7 Western Region Congregations by State and Canada:
Five-year Intervals 1885 to 1930.*

State	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930
Canada		1	1	2	3	8	14	15	15	15
Colorado		1	1	3	5	4	3	3	4/1	4
Montana			1	3	3	3	4/1	4/1	5	3
Washington			1	1	2	2	5	6	8	10/1
Wyoming			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
California			3	1	3	6	11/1	13/1	15/3	17/1
Idaho				1	1	2	2	2	2	2
N. Dakota				1	1	1				
S. Dakota				1	1	2	2	3/5	3/5	4/3
Texas				1						
Oregon							1	1	1	1
Totals		2	8	15	20	29	43/2	48/7	54/9	57/5

*The second number in the columns starting from 1915 represents associated congregations.

The Western region proved to be a new frontier for the Covenant. Particularly the West Coast states and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia were represented in SEMCo with several congregations. This should be seen in relation to the influx of Swedish settlers to the West and the arrival of waves of Swedish immigrants in Canada just prior to World War I (Carlsson 1976 p. 127). The occurrence of associate-member congregations was not very wide-spread in this region; of the 9 recorded in 1925, 5 were in S. Dakota.

Table 3.8 Eastern Region Congregations by State
Five-year Intervals 1885 to 1930.*

State	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930
Massachusetts	1	1	1						1/22	1/22
Pennsylvania			2	2	2	3	3/4	3/9	3/15	4/15
New York			3	3	5	5	5	4	4/12	4/12
Ohio			1	1	1	1	1	1/1	1/2	1/2
Alabama							1	1	1	1
New Jersey								1	1/4	1/4
Connecticut									1/21	1/21
New Hampshire									0/1	0/1
Rhode Island									1/5	0/6
Vermont									0/3	0/3
Florida										1
Totals	1	1	7	6	8	9	10/4	10/10	13/85	14/86

*The second number in the columns starting from 1915 represents associated congregations.

The Eastern region is characterized by a large majority of associate-member congregations. Apart from the states comprising the Eastern Missionary Society (EMS) of the Congregational denomination, only three other states are represented for the period: Ohio, Alabama and Florida with one congregation each. Particularly the latter two of these three, however, mark the entrance of SEMCo into states having insignificant numbers of Swedish-born population (in this case 0.1 percent: Figure 3.1).

The Eastern congregations, which from quite an early date enjoyed close ties with the Congregationalists, were quite reluctant to sever these ties, as the records would seem to indicate. At most, 8 EMS congregations joined as formal members during the period of a total of some 80 congregations in the society altogether.

Overall, the Core region maintained its central position with 209 of the 280 member congregations in 1930. Eighty-six of the 128 associate-member congregations were from the East; only 5 from the West. Whereas the West region proved to be a fruitful frontier for SEMCo, the East, with its large Swedish population well represented by Congregationalist Mission

enclaves, gained in attention, and by the end of the period, had the potential of becoming an area of further SEMCo expansion.

It has already been alluded to that many of the associate-member congregations later became formal members of SEMCo. It is difficult to follow this except for the last third of Period I, since the status of such congregations was recorded beginning in 1915. Table 3.9 shows the rate of increase of congregations joining the denomination for the entire period as well as the effect of associate congregations becoming formal member congregations for the last 15 years of the period.

Table 3.9 Member and Associate-Member Congregation Increases by Region: 1885-1930*

Region	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920	1925	1930
Core	45	76	113	124	155	171	180/21	194/32	204/32	209/34
ANI**		31	37	11	31	16	9	14-4	10-9	5-8
Western		2	8	15	20	29	43/2	48/7	54/9	57/5
ANI**			6	7	5	9	14	5-1	6-1	3-4
Eastern	1	1	7	6	8	9	10/4	10/10	13/85	14/86
ANI**		0	6	-1	2	1	1	0	3	1-2
Totals		32	49	17	38	26	24	19	19	9

*Associate congregations are given after the "/" and are not included in the figures given for the year.

**Absolute Net Increase of member congregations over the previous year. The figure after the "-" indicates the number of former associated congregations to join as formal members, thus; under 1920, 14-4 represents a net gain (additions minus withdrawals) of 14 congregations over 1915 and that 4 of the additions were formerly associate-member congregations.

In the Core region, the rate of increase was quite erratic, showing an overall drop by the end of the period. Between 1916 and 1930, a net increase of 29 congregations occurred in this region. During the same period of time, 21 formerly associate-member congregations joined. The proportion of former associate-member congregations to all those joining is

difficult to ascertain since the number of congregations leaving the denomination for each year is not known. However, for the denomination as a whole, it is seen in Table 3.9 that 21 former associate-member congregations were among the 56 congregations to join the denomination during the same period (see Table 3.2). Thus, around half of the joining congregations towards the end of the period were former associate-member congregations. As is further demonstrated in Table 3.9, the number of associate-member congregations did not diminish as a result of some of these altering their status. Given the numerous changes in status from associate to formal member and the continual influx of associate congregations in the denomination, there occurred a constant turn-over of associate-member congregations and a considerable number of congregations became formal members after first joining SEMCo as associate congregations.

Illinois and Minnesota, with the greatest representation of SEMCo congregations, accounted for just over 50 percent of the Core region congregations in 1930. An examination of the congregational structure in these two states reveals basic differences accountable perhaps to the different Swedish settlement patterns there, something which reflects basic differences in the economic composition of the two. The classification of the SEMCo congregations in the two states is given in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10 Classification of Illinois and Minnesota
Congregations: 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930

Year	1-25		26-50		51-100		101-500		501-		Missing		Totals	
	I.	M.	I.	M.	I.	M.	I.	M.	I.	M.	I.	M.	I.	M.
1900	3	13	8	10	5	5	9	5	1	1			26	34
1910	0	17	8	20	11	11	11	8	2	3	1	1	33	60
1920	0	22	9	15	5	11	21	12	2	2		5	37	67
1930	0	26	8	20	6	12	24	15	2	2		1	40	76

Note: In so far as possible, adjustments have been made for missing figures by using available figures for the closest following year.

As seen in Table 3.10, a consistently large majority (80 percent) of Minnesota congregations have 100 or fewer members for the entire period. The value for Illinois, on the other hand, varies between 61 percent in 1900 and 35 percent in 1930. After 1910, Illinois shows no congregations with

fewer than 26 members while this category remains overall the largest for Minnesota with the exception of 1910. For 1920 and 1930, the category 101-500 accounts for about three-fifths of all congregations in Illinois.

This basic difference in the congregational pattern of the two states is further illustrated by figures on the rural and urban distribution of congregations and membership for 1926 (Religious Bodies 1926). The data, which include associate-member congregations as well, record 39 urban and 3 rural congregations in Illinois, compared to 25 urban and 69 rural Minnesota congregations. In Illinois, the urban congregations comprised 99 percent of the membership. In Minnesota, the figures are 66 percent urban, 34 percent rural.

Thus, while on the congregational level Minnesota is three-fourths rural and Illinois is overwhelmingly urban, the majority membership of both states is urban; here again Illinois is almost completely urban.

Similar figures for the denomination as a whole are shown in Table 3.11, and are based on 357 congregations, thus including as many as 90 associate-member congregations.

Table 3.11 Urban and Rural Distribution of 357 Member and Associate-Member Congregations: 1926

Region	Congregations				Membership		
	Total	Urban	Rural		Total	Urban	Rural
		n (%)	n %			%	%
Core	268	105 (39)	163 (61)		24,923	(68)	(32)
Western	45	30 (66)	15 (34)		5,262	(73)	(27)
Eastern	44	31 (70)	13 (30)		6,613	(93)	(7)
Totals/ Averages	357	166 (47)	191 (53)		36,798		

Source: Religious Bodies 1926

Certain regional differences are seen in the table above. In terms of the distribution of congregations, the Core region is rural and since the majority of SEMCo congregations are located in this region, it might be stated that SEMCo, on the congregational level, is basically rural. These figures, it may be added, are strongly influenced by the heavily rural

composition of congregations in four Core states: Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas. All other indications from the table, however, point towards an urban denomination: both in the East and West, the congregations are mainly situated in urban areas and in terms of membership for the denomination as a whole, the urban percentage is 68 percent in the Midwest and 93 percent in the East.

This 1926 survey sheds some light on earlier indications of the sex distribution of Swedish emigrants. In Chapter 1.2, the over-representation of males among the emigrants was mentioned and it was shown that for all emigrants from Sweden, the overall ratio of women to men was .77, a relative distribution of 43 percent female and 57 percent male. It was reported in 1926 that the overall SEMCo membership sex distribution was 43 percent male and 57 percent female; a male to female ratio of .77 (Religious Bodies 1926 p. 1292; and Beijbom 1972 p. 183). In other words, whereas there were some 133 Swedish males for every 100 Swedish females in the general population, within SEMCo there were only 77 males for every 100 females. In this particular respect, SEMCo differed quite drastically from the Swedish population in America as a whole with the male members being strongly under-represented.

3.7 Sunday-School Activity

Sunday school statistics for the early years of the Covenant, insofar as they exist, are quite sporadic. The congregations for which figures are recorded are interspersed with congregations not reporting figures, which implies either a failure to report or the absence of Sunday schools for these congregations. For two years, 1900 and 1905, the more complete attendance figures can be compared to figures for the category "members' children under 15 years". Assuming the age of 15 as the upper limit for Sunday school attendance, it is observed from the 1900 statistics that 11,217 of 15,767 Sunday school pupils in 57 congregations were members' children; in other words, the Sunday schools were frequented to a substantial degree (30 percent) by children of non-members. The figures for 1905 show similar results.

The proportion of non-member children is especially high in areas of high Swedish population concentrations, for example, in Chicago and Minneapolis, where the number of members' children for many congregations accounts for 50 percent or less of the total attendance.

Covenant Yearbooks do not report attendance figures from 1906 until

1923, when 38,492 pupils are recorded in 362 Sunday schools. From 1925 to 1930, some 390 schools report a total attendance of some 44,000 pupils. Thus, at least in the early 1920's, more Sunday schools than congregations are reported in the Covenant statistics, including associate-member congregations. The situation was similar in 1917 according to a report that showed the presence of independent Swedish congregations and Swedish Congregational congregations represented in the SEMCo Sunday school statistics (YB17:110 ff). In comparison to overall congregational membership figures, Sunday school attendance appears to have been somewhat higher.

Sunday school activity on the denominational level remained relatively unorganized until the formation of a Sunday school committee in 1916 (Person 1928). Following a study of the activities of the Sunday schools, the committee recommended the preparation of graded lessons aimed at meeting the needs of the situation. The results of the study revealed the need for materials in both Swedish and English; in 63 percent of all Sunday school organizations, only Swedish was used while in 37 percent, both languages were used (YB17:110 ff). There were also a few reports of special Sunday schools classes conducted for children of non-Swedish parents (ibid).

The Sunday school committee's recommendations to develop lesson material of their own resulted in a cooperative effort in which SEMCo was joined in 1921 by several denominations including SMF, EFS, the Baptists, Methodists and a year later the Pentecostals, all from Sweden, and the Swedish Baptists in America (YB21:36 ff; YB22:69 f).

3.8 SEMCo Institutions

An inventory of the various activities and programs initiated by the Covenant during Period I reveals an interest on the part of the denomination to serve their own people in a variety of respects. This interest is evident both among the organizational decision makers including the delegates to the annual conventions and among the constituency which supported the institutions financially. As will be indicated below, these service institutions were not limited solely to SEMCo members. While there was not a deliberate effort on any front to limit the availability of the services, the simple presence and use of the Swedish language served in some cases to curtail the scope of attractiveness.

Common for all the institutions to be examined here is that they were initiated or adopted as a concern of the Covenant first after careful and often lengthy consideration by the organizational leadership and the convienned delegates at the annual conventions. These discussions often bottomed in the heavy financial demands of such undertakings. And though the decision to carry out such demanding projects is an estimation by the leadership of the denomination's potential, the success of the Covenant constituency in supporting such projects while certainly a credit to their benevolent spirit, is also an indication of their social and economic status on the whole.

Both the benevolent and educational institutions functioned within the framework established by their founders and the institutional patterns remained largely unchanged throughout all of Period I (Olsson 1962 p. 600).

3.8.1 Efforts in Education

3.8.1.1 Bible School and College

Having decided to unite into a Swedish Covenant, the delegates meeting in the Winter of 1885 meeting proceeded to other points on the agenda which included the question of facilities for training pastors. The meeting chose a committee of three to work with the school issue. The Congregationalist representatives present at this first meeting invited the school committee to their seminary for discussions concerning possible cooperation in the training and education of pastors (YB85:17 f). At the Autumn meeting of the same year the chairman of the committee reported on his contacts with the Chicago Theological Seminary (run by the Congregationalists) and presented the offer made by the seminary representatives which included the establishment of a Swedish department at the seminary and the financial support of a teacher chosen by SEMCo. After consultation with P. P. Waldenström, F. Risberg, former Lutheran priest who served as an SMF itinerate pastor, was recruited from Sweden as teacher and head of the department which was begun on a trial basis for one year.

The plan was for the Swedish students to receive instruction in Biblical exegesis, history and systematic theology by the school's own teachers in English. Risberg, using the Swedish language, would be in charge of homiletics, "making good preachers out of them", and instruct them in the history of their own country and in the heritage of the Covenant Church in America (YB85:14 f). After an introductory course in the

Swedish department, the students continued with the two lines of study.

In 1889, David Nyvall, who had taken over some of the teaching in the department, reported an enrollment of 30 students (YB89). It was further reported that the department had become an independent unit, with its own courses and with all instruction carried on by Swedish teachers in Swedish. In 1890, the program became a three-year course of study with two teachers in charge. In addition to theological subjects, the curriculum included several general courses and Swedish language (YB89:27 f). Thirty-nine students were enrolled in the school for 1890, and 35 for 1891. With free tuition and scholarships available, the Swedish Department attracted 242 students between 1885 and 1905, 150 of whom served in Swedish-American churches (Olsson 1962 p. 338).

Despite the support offered by the Congregationalists for the education of pastors, the Covenant delegates and leadership remained intent on starting their own Bible school. Several offers were made including promises of both land and finances in return for placing the school in certain locations, all of which were rejected. Although it is difficult to pinpoint the particular reasons for SEMCo's dissatisfaction with the Chicago Theological Seminary arrangement, there was a manifest uneasiness on the part of the Covenant leadership about the possibility of being dominated by the American denomination and eventually assimilated into the Congregationalist fold entirely (Olsson 1962 p. 339; Walan 1963 p. 101 ff). One area of contention was that the overseers from SEMCo, who could review and select fitting candidates for the department, had no voice in determining which of the graduating students were competent preachers, ready to lead their own (SEMCo's) congregations. A prerequisite for admittance to the department was that the candidate's preaching abilities and gifts be attested to by his home congregation (YB85). However, one of the criticisms directed toward the department in 1889 was that "not all studying there were preachers" (YB89:28).

David Nyvall resigned as teacher at the seminary in 1890 and agreed to travel about and present the idea of the Covenant's own school to the congregations. The Congregationalists were approached about transferring the Swedish department to SEMCo, and when this idea was rejected, the decision was made to take over a school operated by the evangelist August Skogsberg in Minneapolis and David Nyvall (YB91; YB15:21). Efforts to recruit F. Risberg for the Covenant school failed⁵.

In Minneapolis, instruction was divided into a general department and a Bible department during the first year of operation: the general curriculum included such subjects as English, mathematics, bookkeeping, stenography and typewriting and all instruction was in the hands of three Swedish-American teachers, in English (YB91:25). In the Bible department,

teaching was conducted in Swedish in the subjects of Swedish language and literature, church history, Old and New Testament. Here also, only those whose "Christian character, zeal and gift of preaching" could be certified were admitted to the school (YB 92:26). During the first year, 17 were enrolled in the Bible school, and 89 in the school totally.

In 1892 the decision was made to start a third department at the Minneapolis school, a preparatory school for teachers. Instruction was to be carried out in the subjects of English, Swedish and Bible in order to prepare the students in part for further university studies but also as teachers to assume "...teaching positions at American public schools in the country-side, to furthermore be suitable to arrange Swedish day-schools and to contribute in Sunday-school activities." (YB 92:26)

In 1893, along with an offer of land and finances from the Swedish University Association, it was decided to move the school to the vicinity of Chicago. Thus, through the efforts of several Chicago residents (who also happened to be local businessmen and SEMCo leaders) interested in establishing the school there, and who had formed the Association and made available money for this purpose, the school was moved to newly constructed quarters in Bowmanville, Chicago and opened June 16, 1894 for operation (YB94:7). The contract established with the Association bound the school to its Bowmanville (North Park) location for a period of 50 years (YB95:32).

Besides serving as a pastor-training school, several other departments were established on the premises to serve other interests as well. The other departments included a preparatory course of study for those not having completed grammar school and wishing to continue to a higher level. The Academy was comparable to high school and included a general curriculum in both Swedish and English. The Business Department offered courses in accounting and business, and the Music Department, besides having a few full-time students, was open to those enrolled in the other departments as well. The enrollment figures in as far as they are recorded in Yearbook reports are given in Table 3.12.

Although Swedish remained the language of the Bible department until the early 1920's, already in 1899 it was recommended that the pastoral candidates, in response to the increasing need for bilingual preachers, improve their English proficiency by extending their studies at the school to include the Bible preparatory courses, some of which were taught in English, prior to the Bible courses, which were held in Swedish. (YB99:22). The pendulum soon swung in the other direction and in 1913, apparently due to decreasing knowledge of the native tongue of the Covenant, Swedish was made a obligatory subject of study in the general education curriculum required of the pastoral candidates. Following complaints in 1916 that the American-born students experienced considerable difficulties in fulfilling

Table 3.12 Minnesota and Chicago North Park Enrollment Figures:
1893-1930

Year	Academy	Preparatory	Bible/ theol.	Bus- iness	Music	Net Total*	Seminary graduates
1893	54		38	63			
1894	46		31	48			
1895	not available						8
1896	34		31	27		74	11
1897	10	23	15	30	3	81	5
1898	20	18	13	33	13		5
1899	15	9	16	35	16		4
1900	12	11	15	26	6		5
1901	17	15	18	33	6		3
1902	36	12	30	29	17		6
1903	49	25	34	42	60	165	7
1904	42	18	38	64	38	181	7
1905	41	18	36	64	45	180	9
1906	28	18	45	31	27	139	14
1907	34	24	43	44	91	268**	16
1908	not available						8
1909	40	27	19	37	69	184	2
1910	28	19	27	38	59	160	11
1911	30	26	26	20	68	154	14
1912	34	16	22	19	69	141	4
1913	54	16	32	34	104	187	7
1914	86	20	25	21	116	201	6
1915	81	15	17	31	129	228	8
1916	82	86	18	38	163	300	8
1917	101	70	23	78	145	406	
1918	90	60	26	64	113	349	6
1919	87	26	30	30	131	239	7
		Jr. College ***					
1920	82	12	31	28	141	251	5
1921	125	24	42	59	196	332	13
1922	137	40	38	63	157	384	3
1923	156	44	44	68	182	402	9
1924	169	49	44	63	182	386	8
1925	203	80	50	54	206	450	17
1926	233	100	33		218	528	9
1927	190	122	31		228	506	6
1928	198	136	35		214	493	9
1929	195	120	36		181	470	10
1930	161	169	32		112	500	5

*This column represents students enrolled, not the number for all courses combined.

**These figures include evening courses not included for other years.

***The Preparatory school became a two-year Jr. College.

Sources: Covenant Yearbooks; North Park College and Seminary Yearbooks, 1892-1930 with adjustments; seminary graduates: Bergh 1966

Excerpt from the Covenant Yearbook, 1914, in translated form

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEPARTMENTS AT NORTH PARK COLLEGE AND SEMINARY, 1914

1. Preparatory English School, comparable to the highest levels of the American grammar school for the purpose of entering high school, especially suited for youth coming from Sweden and others who have not completed grammar school.

2. Complete English High School, offering a four-year course in the English, German, Latin, Greek and Swedish languages, in Christianity, History, Science, Mathematics, Writing and Accounting, providing a well rounded education and recognized by leading universities which, without further examination, accept those having completed this course of study.

3. Three-Year Vocational High School, offering instruction in general high school subjects including bookkeeping, trade and other subjects in Business. This is a practical education for those without resources or aptitude to take the complete high school course leading to university studies. This course is comparable to the "folk" high school in Sweden.

4. Business School, including bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, commercial law, accounting and handwriting. These subjects are divided into two courses which can be studied individually or conjointly. Students having completed one or both of these courses with good results receive a letter of recommendation from the school.

5. School of Music, with instruction in piano, organ, violin, and other instruments, also in Harmony, Theory, Music History and Song, by excellent teachers. The studies lead to a diploma and a letter of recommendation to deserving students for positions such as organists and music teachers.

6. Theological Seminary, offering a three-year course in the Holy Scriptures, Dogmatics, Homiletics, Church History, Missions History, History of Religion, Pedagogy and Philosophy of Religion together with Swedish language and other practical courses in pastoral care for pastors, missionaries and teachers. Prerequisites for entrance to this department include studies comparable to at least two years of American high school and recommendation by a congregation or a pastor.

7. Evening Courses in elementary subjects in various areas in the city, as well as classes for Sunday-school teachers and Bible study for youth can be arranged upon interest.

the Swedish language requirements, alterations were made and in 1920, the school board recommended the hiring of competent bilingual teachers for the Bible department in anticipation of the impending switch to English (YB20:131).

The North Park enrollment figures (Table 3.12) for the different departments combined show a considerable increase by the end of Period I. However, the figures for the individual departments are unsteady and tend towards a cyclic pattern- if any pattern at all. The Academy, Bible and Business departments show relatively high enrollment figures early in the period, again around 1903 to 1906, and once more between 1923 and 1926. In addition, a sudden bulge occurs around 1916/1917, in all probability related to events surrounding World War I, but the increased enrollment disappears just as suddenly with the exception of one department. The Bible department appears to have maintained a higher enrollment until well into the 1920's before dropping down somewhat as did the other departments at this time. The increase in the enrollment of pastoral students came at a time of concern among the Covenant Ministerium with the over-abundance of pastors in the Covenant, and at a time when only the newly emerging pastors could satisfy the demand for more bilingual pastors (Olsson 1962 p. 523).

The establishment of educational facilities was given high priority by the denomination from the very beginning. The operations and development of the school in Chicago received financial support from the church centrally and from various associations, projects, enterprising missionaries (see Olsson 1962 p. 373 f) and private individuals in addition. With this institution, it is evident that the Covenant endeavored to offer instruction and education for a wide spectrum of vocations in addition to the initial objectives of pastors' training. Furthermore, the general curriculum courses were apparently available to non-Swedish speaking people -and non-Covenant people to a greater extent than were the courses of the Bible department which, it would appear, were closely controlled from within the institution itself (ibid p. 523).

In the area of academic achievements, the Academic department of the school was recognized by the University of Illinois in 1900 for its Swedish literature and language instruction; thus, North Park became the first institution of higher education in the state of Illinois to offer academic credits in Swedish language and literature (YB00:41). A decision was made in 1920 to start a 2-year college which was the first step towards the fully accredited college to come later. And in 1925, the seminary (Bible department) offered for the first time the Bachelor of Theology degree to students completing the Bible studies curriculum.

3.8.1.2 Minnehaha Academy

While North Park was the largest educational institution of the Covenant, there were other, less pretentious ones on the regional and congregational levels. The Minnehaha Academy was such an institution operated on a regional basis.

At the 1911 Annual Northwestern Mission Society Youth Convention, a plan was devised to establish a fund for the development of a school on the Minnehaha school complex in Minneapolis, Minnesota. With the \$25,000 collected for this purpose and supplemented by additional funds, the institution was opened for operation in 1914 with an enrollment of 114 students. Theodore Andersson, later to be president of the Covenant, served as Dean of the academy.

In a report on the school's progress, Andersson described the goal and objective of the school in terms of its being "a Christian institution for education and up-bringing as well as a center for the Swedish language and Swedish culture" (YB15:53 f).

Table 3.13 Minnehaha Academy Enrollment: 1914-1930

Year	High School	Commerce	Music	Bible	Net Totals
1914					112
1915					273
1916					275
1917	61	85	88		310
1918	75	107	82		311
1919					336
1920	151	177	152		424
1921	159	159	148		419
1922	160	139	128	128	485
1923	178	104	102	36	402
1924	194	102	115	33	343
1925	233	119	114	29	399
1926	245	111	106	29	365
1927	244	102	88	26	326
1928	226	85	57	23	275
1929	191	73	57	25	244
1930	186	73	71	38	253

The academy attracted students from outside the sponsoring district and even from outside the confines of the Covenant church. The 1916 student body, for example, included students from Minnesota, S. Dakota, Wisconsin and Michigan. In the following years, students from as many as 12 different states and from Canada attended (YB19, YB20, YB29). Besides SEMCo, several other unspecified denominations were represented in the 1919 student body including pupils of Swedish, Norwegian and American nationalities. According to a 1926 report, the denominational breakdown (in terms of percent) of the student body of 365 was: SEMCo (62), Lutheran (9), Free (7), Baptist (7), Presbyterian (4), Methodist (3), Congregational (1) and other (7) (YB26:89). Thus, in addition to the 6 denominations representing the bulk of the Swedish population in America, several other denominations are represented among 11 percent of the student body for this year.

As seen in Table 3.13, the academy was comprised of three sections, a high school, a commerce department and a music department. The commerce department had more of a practical curriculum, with courses offered in business, accounting and secretarial work. The Bible department was added in 1922 with the general aim of serving congregational workers and Sunday-school teachers.

3.8.1.3 Swedish Day-Schools

Considered in the context of the combined SEMCo efforts on all levels to ensure continuity through the education of the denomination's youth, the Minnehaha Academy was among the last initiated. Perhaps this regional undertaking represents a belated attempt at fulfil an objective voiced by Covenant leaders two decades earlier to the effect that the congregations in the Covenant should establish schools where Christian teachers would instruct the children in Swedish before sending them to the public schools (YB91:6; YB96:105)). At North Park in 1898, such instruction was offered during the summer months and then turned over to the local congregation (YB98:40). The degree to which pre-school language instruction took place already within the denomination is uncertain; however, the congregational statistics from 1890 to 1903 reveal that the practice was rather widespread at least for a time.

Since the statistics for these years are incomplete in many instances, a better view of the situation can be gained by considering the occurrence of the schools over the 13-year period (1890-1903) for a given number of congregations. The results indicate that of the 145 congregations listed in

the 1900 statistics, half (77) of them had at least at one time between 1890 and 1903 operated a Swedish day-school. Furthermore, in all but 9 of these 77 congregations with a membership of over 50 in 1900, similar day-schools were reported at some time during this 13-year period. It would thus appear that the occurrence of the Swedish day-schools was more a phenomenon of the areas with a larger concentration of Swedes but not entirely absent among the more rural congregations.

Of the 49 schools reported in the 1900 statistics, more than half were located in two states, Illinois and Iowa, which together accounted for 30 percent of all SEMCo congregations at this time. In both these states, all congregations with a membership over 50 recorded schools in 1900.

The length of time these schools operated in a year varied from a full year in 3 locations (2 in Chicago, 1 in Minneapolis), to several weeks, presumably during the summer months.

From the 1900 figures, the number of children enrolled is 2003. This amounted locally to the equivalent of between 20 and 65 percent of the Sunday-school children recorded for the respective congregations. But, while the availability of the Swedish day-schools was generally good in certain areas, rather few seem to have taken advantage of the opportunity. Exactly how long the schools continued is uncertain from the available reports and statistics. Nor is it certain to what extent the schools catered to the newly arriving immigrant children and to what extent they functioned primarily to preserve the language among the established immigrants.

3.8.2 Other Covenant Institutions

Included among the roster of Covenant institutions for Period I are several of benevolent nature, including childrens' homes, convalescent homes, homes for the elderly, hospitals, seamen's hospices, etc. These institutions should be viewed against the background of the immigration, since the hardships encountered en route to the new settlements often brought with them the need for care facilities of various kinds. But even beyond the needs of the immigrants and the immediate effects of the migration trauma, there would always be the perpetual demand for the services provided by the benevolent organizations from every segment of society. As will be observed in the following account, some of the institutions were initiated to meet specific problems and in attempting to satisfy these, other problems were brought to light with the result that the initial objectives of the particular institution were expanded.

The plight of the destitute families, widows and orphans among the immigrants and settlers was discussed by the SEMCo leaders at the 1885 convention of congregational delegates. It was decided quite early to send a missionary to Castle Garden at the New York port of entry to aid the thousands of Swedish and other Scandinavian immigrants arriving monthly. Furthermore, a decision was made to explore the possibility of starting a convalescent home in Chicago. This became a reality with the opening of the Home of Mercy in Bowmanville, Chicago in the spring of 1886, and 14 patients were admitted the first summer. Although the primary intention of the institution was very general, "...for father and motherless children, helpless widows and the sick..." (YB85:25), it soon began functioning as a hospital where patients could receive attention depending on the severity of the ailment. Almost from the start, the home had difficulty in admitting all those requesting attention as can be observed by the frequent mention of waiting lists and the need for expanded facilities in the annual reports to the denomination (see annual reports in YB).

The services offered by the institution were apparently available to anyone desiring attention in a "Swedish" environment. And while there was no stipulation as to who could be admitted, the regulations stated that those with "incurable" diseases were to be taken in (YB01:38). Nor was the home limited to Covenant people. It was, however, emphasized in some instances that in the event of waiting lists, priority was "always given believers irrespective of confession" (YB90:33, YB91:31). Of the resident patients in 1888, 17 were listed as Mission Friends, 4 as Lutherans, 2 as Baptists, one as Methodist and 21 "had no church affiliation in America" (YB88:24).

As the type of assistance required became more directed towards the more qualified medical and surgical needs, physicians and other professional help were secured. In addition, classes were organized by the physicians to instruct the staff in the rudiments of medical attention, enabling them to assume a greater share of the less demanding tasks. The classes gradually developed into a formal nursing school (YB99:27), which offered the students instruction in both the theoretical and practical aspects of proper medical care which included practical training in the home (YB99:27). The first candidates to complete the course of study graduated in 1901 (Table 3.14).

Admissions to the home grew from an average of 21 per year for the first 5 years to approx. 130 per year towards the turn of the century. The turn-over was large, perhaps due to the availability of medical and surgical care which demanded shorter periods of convalescence but also due to the rather limited capacity of the facility. As will be discussed later,

the Home of Mercy was dependent on contributions from outside sources for general operations perhaps due to a large degree on the number of free patients cared for. In the reports to the denomination it is mentioned, for instance, that 105 of the 114 patients included in the 1898 report were unable to pay for the care received; similar figures exist for other years.

With the construction of a 40-bed hospital adjacent to the home in 1903, made possible through a gift of Alaskan Gold money donated for the purpose by two former Covenant missionaries (YB01:6,113), the function of the home soon altered so that in 1909 it was described as becoming a home for the elderly and not the convalescent home as was initially intended. This change in function was due to the separate hospital which assumed the responsibility for short-term medical and surgical patient care. In 1918, a new addition to the hospital boosted its capacity to 120 beds. Yet another building was completed and opened for use in 1928. A newly constructed Home of Mercy was opened in 1927 and housed 105 beds.

Table 3.14 Covenant Hospital and Home of Mercy Statistics, 1904-1930, and Nursing School Graduates, 1901-1930

	Hospital		Home of Mercy	Nursing
	Treated	Average	Residents Average	School Graduates
1901				1
1902				4
1903				3
1904	249			3
1905	319		27	6
1906-1910	1,826	365	42	16*
1911-1915	3,114	623	62	25
1916-1920	7,184	1,437	74	28*
1921-1925	18,772	3,754	83	55
1926-1930	24,761	4,952	96	60*

*Figures for one year missing.

The altered function of the home is reflected in the number of persons admitted following 1904, which are fewer than the yearly averages for the home prior to the start of the independent hospital, and show a fairly constant increase to the end of the period. At the same time the number of inpatients increases gradually from 27 to 103 by the end of the period. Although there is no information available indicating the background of the patients under care in either of these institutions, it is most likely that the Home of Mercy remained a "Swedish" institution to a greater extent than did the hospital, simply due to the nature of the former as a denominationally supported "Covenant" facility for the care of the elderly in comparison to the independent financial position of the hospital. An indication of the representativeness of the home within the Covenant at the end of Period I is found in the statement of the manager of the Home of Mercy: "Nearly every state in the Union where we have churches is represented" (YB30:61).

Since the total number of persons having received care in the Home of Mercy - the vast majority of whom were doubtlessly of Swedish origins - represents but a fraction of the total care needed by the Swedish community in Chicago alone, it would be presumptuous and quite meaningless to judge the contribution of the institution simply on these quantitative terms. However, both the type of assistance offered by the institution and the often less well-to-do category of people receiving the greatest benefit thereof provide an equally relevant measure of the contribution of this institution to the Covenant denomination and to the Swedish community in Chicago at large. Beginning in 1919, the hospital and the home operated under separate budgets. A review of the financial results of both institutions after 1919 draws attention both to the financially independent position of the hospital and the total dependency of the home on outside contributions (alluded to earlier) for survival.

A year-to-year comparison of the results of both institutions can be made with the help of Table 3.15. Largely due to outside contributions, the two institutions operated in the black prior to 1918. However, the separation of the two accounts shows that home operated with a large deficit every year except for one. Thanks to considerable contributions and donations, which often more than doubled the income from operations, a positive result was achieved every year except towards the end of the 1920's. The deficit in operations is at least in part accountable to the fact that up to half of the patients residing there were unable to pay the fees either in part or entirely (see e.g. YB00:35, YB01:38, YB14). After 1919 and the separation of the two accounts, it is clear that the hospital was the more financially stable of the two and that the Home of Mercy more or less functioned as a charity institution. The policy of the home was

that services rendered were paid according to means, those without sufficient funds received free attention and care. Thus, the Home of Mercy was entirely dependent on the strong, continued support of the Covenant constituency⁶.

Table 3.15 Home of Mercy and Hospital Operation Results:
1920-1930 (in Dollars)

Year	Home of Mercy		Net	Covenant Hospital Operations Balance
	Operations Balance	Contri- butions		
1920	-19,418	21,712	- 2,308	+14,671
1921	-17,220	19,269	+ 550	+26,406
1922	-24,347	26,381	+ 252	+28,670
1923	-10,241	18,124	+ 5,768	+28,434
1924	-13,656	19,676	+ 3,779	+42,320
1925	-13,508	14,994	+ 4,744	+40,866
1926	+ 818	21,885	+20,223	+35,057
1927	-10,876	14,522	+ 1,924	+32,612
1928	-11,598	19,016	+ 6,553	+28,242
1929	-16,361	14,320	- 2,042	+36,854
1930	-22,379	21,394	- 985	+47,806

The Covenant Hospital, on the other hand, proved not only to be self-supportive, but also quite lucrative, increasing its general fund assets from just under \$11,000 in 1919 to over a half-million dollars by 1930 (YB30). An enormous help in getting established without high overhead costs was the donation of \$25,000 of "Alaskan gold money" by Covenant miner and one-time missionary John Brynteson, for the first hospital building in 1903⁷.

Mention has been made in the foregoing text of the financial contributions to the Covenant institutions and of the crucial importance these have had in the daily operations of, for example, the Covenant Home of Mercy in Chicago.

One of the sources of contributions was the Covenant Women's Association, a concerted effort by Covenant women mainly from Chicago but also

from many if not all districts and states in which the Covenant had congregations. The association got started in 1916 with a membership of about 100. The association increased its membership to about 1500 in 1921, 3000 in 1925 and peaked (for Period I) in 1929, with 3849 members. It would appear that the undertaking received wide support not least among the elderly. This is witnessed towards the end of the 1930's, by the special mention made in the association's reports of the significant contributions of the elderly women. Among the association's achievements can be mentioned the funding of a girl's dormitory at North Park College in Chicago and one at the Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis. The former was a project involving some \$40,000 which was raised in its entirety by the Women's Association (YB27, YB30:72). Besides the larger donations and projects, the association made donations on a yearly basis to many of the Covenant institutions described in this section (see below), not least to the Home of Mercy.

Except for the Minnehaha Academy, the institutions described thus far were denominationally sponsored as has been explained. The following is an inventory of other institutions, initiated on the district or congregational levels. They received financial contributions from the denomination centrally but were not responsible to SEMCo as an organization (See Covenant Yearbooks; Olsson 1962 p. 379 ff).

1. Scandinavian Immigrant Home, started in 1881 in New York to aid Scandinavian emigrants arriving in America
2. Scandinavian Sailors' Home was started in 1886 in East Boston, Massachusetts by the Eastern Missionary Society with the intention of offering Scandinavian and other sailors visiting the port a hostel. Scandinavian sailor missions were initiated by EFS of Sweden in 1873 in Boston and Brooklyn. Starting in the 1880's, the Mission Friends supported the work in Boston (Olsson, *ibid*).
3. The Swedish National Sanitorium, located in Denver, Colorado, was aided financially by SEMCo as one of five supporting Swedish denominations. The institution also received support from the Covenant Women's Association on a regular basis.
4. Covenant Children's Home in Princeton, Illinois, was started in 1921 by the Illinois Conference and the Sunday-School Union in Illinois.
5. The Evangelical Covenant Hospital of Omaha, Nebraska, was started in 1904.
6. Children's Home, at Phelps Center, Nebraska, was started around 1890.
7. Ebenezer Home at Buffalo, Minnesota, dedicated in 1918.

8. Bethany Old Peoples Home in Spokane, Washington, started in 1920
9. Middle East Missionary Society Home for the Aged, located in Frewsburg, New York and dedicated in 1923.
10. Bethany Home in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was founded in 1929.
11. Emanuel Hospital in Turlock, California, started about 1917 and operated a Nurses' Training School as well (YB29:74).
12. Bethany Home was started in 1924 in Turlock, California.
13. Sailors' Home, in San Fransisco, California, started prior to 1903.
14. Swedish Christian Childrens' Home started in 1900 in Cromwell, Connecticut.
15. Home of the Aged operating in 1922 in Brooklyn, New York.

3.9 Outreach

This section is similar to that of Section 3.5 in subject and concerns the expansion and distribution of the denomination. However, whereas the earlier section was a description of results, that is, the actual location and expansion of the denomination, certain aspects of the outreach of SEMCO will be examined in the following section from the point of view of the denomination's own efforts. These efforts can be described in terms of various categories such as the agencies used to evangelize, the focus of attention of the denomination, and the areas into which SEMCO sent representatives.

SEMCO conducted both domestic and foreign mission activities. SEMCO foreign missions during Period I were limited to two geographical areas, China and Alaska, and work in both places had already been initiated by the Covenant in Sweden. Prior to 1889, financial contributions from American congregations for the Alaskan mission were forwarded to the Covenant in Sweden since SEMCO had no formal connections with it (YB88:27). In 1889, an agreement was reached between the two Covenants whereby SEMCO assumed full responsibility for the Alaskan work, including the missionaries already stationed there⁸.

The same year that the Alaskan mission was placed under SEMCO responsibility, a decision was made to send people to work in China (YB89:33), and, as stated earlier, the Swedish Covenant also had mission workers here. In both Alaska and China, the efforts of the missionaries went beyond the establishment of congregations and churches to include schools, trading posts and vocational training. A pastors' training school

was established in China in 1908 in a joint venture with the Swedish Covenant. In both countries, the practice of sending native converts out to proselytize as "travelling representatives and preachers" was adopted.

While the foreign missions' outreach certainly has had vital contributions for development of the Covenant, the bulk of the following discussion will center around the domestic outreach of the denomination.

3.9.1 Agencies

The earliest form of outreach utilized by SEMCo was the travelling representative, a "more mature and spiritually experienced preacher" appointed by the delegates at the annual convention or by Covenant leaders themselves to travel in areas of Mission Friend concentrations to hold meetings where congregations were already found and to organize such meetings where no congregations existed. As can be seen by the reports of travels, the representatives frequented SEMCo congregations and non-SEMCo congregations alike.

The use of travelling representatives and travelling preachers for evangelistic purposes was not new; rather, it was practiced by the Mission Friends prior to the organization of the Covenant denominations both in Sweden and in America (Olsson 1962).

The first SEMCo representatives were sent out by the Covenant delegates assembled in 1885, and the practice continued throughout most of Period I. The list of SEMCo travelling representatives, in addition to those living in America, includes many visiting preachers and leaders from Sweden who made extensively journeys throughout various states and visited scores of Mission gatherings. An example of the latter might be the three visits to America by SMF pioneer and leader P. P. Waldenström.

Another means of creating interest in and extending the outreach of SEMCo was through the use of missionaries. In the earlier years of the Covenant, missionaries were sent out to areas where no Mission societies or gatherings were found with the sole intention of starting them if possible. With the migration of Swedish settlers to the West, for example, to Montana, Oregon, Washington, California and Canada, missionaries were sent there to work in the interests of the Covenant.

A further method of serving Covenant congregations was through evangelists, who travelled about at the request of both SEMCo and other Swedish denominations. These were normally well known and established

personalities such as song-evangelist A. J. Hultman, preacher A. Skogsbergh and others, whose travels included America as well as Sweden.

Although many were called to serve in the various capacities of travelling representative or preacher, missionary or evangelist, the distinction between these categories was not always clear. In general, and judging from the reports of those asked to serve in any of the capacities, the "evangelist" normally designated a well-known or established singer or preacher who frequented many congregations, both SEMCo and non-SEMCo alike, in broad territories; the "travelling representatives" often revisited the same congregations and gatherings within a specific territory; and the "missionary" often travelled in non-SEMCo settlements and in states without SEMCo representation in an effort to create support for mission stations and congregations.

In most cases, the domestic mission activities were operated on a part-time basis whereby a preacher was asked to visit congregations and areas of interest within a given geographical area and for a determined period of time. For this work, a salary was normally paid depending upon need and the person. As is seen in Appendix A, many persons travelled at the same time and often into the same areas more than once during the year. And because of difficulties in arranging for full-time representatives, many were asked to travel intensively for shorter periods of time. As the number of congregations joining SEMCo gained in momentum, the attention of at least some of the travelling representatives and missionaries was turned to soliciting support for the SEMCo institutions, both in terms of people but also in terms of finances. This shift to "public relations" work for the denomination gained in importance particularly as the financial responsibilities of SEMCo increased with the expansion of the institutions in Chicago and with the responsibility of supporting growing numbers of missionaries in foreign countries.

Another form of Covenant outreach was the printed media. According to one source, some 54 different periodicals were published by the Mission Covenant people in America prior to 1930 (Johnson 1935). The majority of these were local publications with very limited spread and often short life-spans. The earliest official organ of the Covenant, *The Missionary* (Missionären), was published in Chicago from 1894 to 1905. Its successor, *The Mission Covenant's Young Peoples' Paper* (Missionsförbundets Ungdomstidning) was published for only four years, until 1915, when it was replaced by *The Covenant Weekly* (Förbundets Veckoblad). *The Mission Friend*, the oldest publication of the Mission Friends was started by the Mission Synod in 1874, and later owned and published by several Covenant organizers. According to Johnson (1935), this paper was widely circulated both within as well as outside SEMCo⁹.

3.9.2 The Spread of Mission Activity in America

An attempt has been made (Appendix A) to systematically list the persons who served under SEMCo as representatives, domestic missionaries and evangelists. The list is based on information recorded in the various section of the Covenant Yearbooks, information which at times is incomplete. Insofar as possible, the areas visited by these men are also included.

In 1887, much of the domestic missionary activity was turned over to the various districts, and in 1895, it was decided that the districts should also assume greater responsibility for the travelling preachers within each district. Evangelists were commissioned by the Covenant on a continual basis and travelling representatives were sent out to solicit support for Covenant institutions and missions. The frequency of persons sent out decreases after 1906, and a committee was appointed to determine the need for representatives and to make recommendations for helping districts in taking over these activities. In all, during Period I, more than 50 different Covenant preachers from both America and Sweden represented the denomination either as travelling preachers, domestic missionaries or evangelists. Of these, all but two had already served in one of these capacities by 1909.

3.9.3 Cooperation with Other Denominations

On numerous occasions throughout Period I, the question of cooperation and merger with other denominations and organizations was debated. The Congregationalists were among the first to direct overtures towards SEMCo which early resulted in a coordinated education venture and the establishment of a Swedish department at the Congregationalist's theological seminary in Chicago. This cooperative effort was discontinued after only a few years, with the establishment of SEMCo's own Bible school (Section 3.8.1.1). For some 25 years following the organization of SEMCo, assistance of various kinds was received from the Congregationalists: for mission programs, educational purposes and for the building of churches as pointed out earlier (Section 3.8.1.1).

The support, however, was looked upon with suspicion in some quarters. The dangers of such assistance were brought out in a report written by

David Nyvall (YB89:28). Several district conferences supported yet another statement concerning the "Congregationalist Question", as it came to be known, in which the American Congregationalist influence on the newly established Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant in America was described in terms of "foreign elements"; and the financial contributions offered poorer congregations by the Congregationalists in return for membership in the Congregationalist movement were labelled "foreign gold" (Mellander 1900). While the American Covenant leaders strongly supported their own independence, there are indications that others, including Fridolf Risberg, teacher at the Swedish department of the Chicago Theological Seminary, and P. P. Waldenström considered close cooperation between SEMCo and the Congregationalists advantageous to the former (ibid:60; Walan 1963 p. 99 ff).

Despite the continued assistance received by many Covenant congregations, the issue of close collaboration with the Congregationalists was resolved by the turn of the century (Olsson 1962 p. 337), and many Swedish Congregationalist congregations later joined SEMCo when they could no longer count on financial aid from the Congregationalists (Walan 1963 p. 106f).

Cooperation with the Swedish Evangelical Free Church was met with more favor in 1896 than had been the case earlier, in 1888 (see Appendix B for a chronological listing of events in Covenant relations with other denominations). With the formation of a Comity committee in 1905, which included delegates from SEMCo, the "Free" congregations and the Eastern Missionary Society (mainly Congregational-affiliated Swedish Mission congregations), proposals and counter-proposals for the union of the three groups involved were offered and considered. Such details as a suitable name caused delays for years at a time. In 1920, the proposed merger of the three groups was accepted by the SEMCo annual convention delegates and referred to the individual congregations, which accepted the proposal by a majority vote of 173 for, 14 against, and 63 abstaining (YB22:119). In 1921, EMS, with about 72 congregations, joined SEMCo but the Free were unable to muster a majority vote and, therefore, maintained their independence (YB22:120). With the outcome of the vote, the committee was dissolved. An effort to reorganize the Comity committee the following year was rejected at the SEMCo annual convention, which instead initiated a "cooperation" committee for the purpose of coordinating certain areas of work otherwise duplicated in several of the Swedish denominations. This cooperation was mainly in the area of preparation of printed material for Sunday-school and youth work.

With the issue of union with the Free finally resolved and the Eastern Swedish Congregationalist congregations gradually joining SEMCo, the stage

was set for cooperation on a formal level with the three Swedish denominations in America with which SEMCo had had little or no formal cooperation earlier: the Methodists, Baptists, and the largest of the Swedish denominations, the Augustana Lutherans. The intention of the cooperation committee established in 1925 was to effectuate closer working relationships between all five Swedish denominations in America (YB25:90 f and Section 3.3). Cooperation occurred to a certain degree with the Free, the Baptists and the Methodists in organizing week-day Bible schools, radio broadcasts (YB27:150 f), and material for children and youth (YB30:138). Augustana, however, withdrew from the cooperative effort in 1927 (see YB51:178).

Proposals of unity and cooperation with other groups are also noted in Appendix B. Upon the decision to relocate the Covenant Bible school, an offer was presented by Wheaton College in Illinois to join forces into a common seminary, an offer which was renewed in 1915, but both were rejected by the Covenant. In 1909, the Norwegian Haugenaut Synod came with a proposal of merger which, too, was rejected. And in 1920, the question of the Covenant joining the Inter-Church World Movement received little support.

The denomination with which SEMCo maintained the closest and most intense working relations throughout Period I was the Covenant in Sweden. This situation prevailed from the very beginning of the American Covenant and increased in intensity with time. The American Covenant was quite dependent on assistance and resources from Sweden, but the flow of resources was not always in the same direction. Among the immigrants were many pastors, some of whom had been trained at schools in Sweden including the Swedish Covenant seminary (SMF 1903:130), but also many would-be pastors who attended the SEMCo seminary in Chicago and later returned to Sweden (ibid; YB24:5). Financial contributions for specific causes were sometimes sent to the Covenant in Sweden. For instance, SEMCo had no Jewish mission of its own, and money received for this cause were forwarded instead to Pastor August Lindström in Stockholm, who worked for the same cause there (YB85:9). In 1903, a contribution of \$15,000 was sent to the needy in Norrland (Sweden) and in Finland (YB03:130).

The teacher called to head the Swedish Department at Chicago Theological Seminary, F. Risberg, was hand-picked by P. P. Waldenström at the request of SEMCo and the Congregationalists. Waldenström himself was requested quite often to visit American Covenant congregations, which he did on three separate occasions, traveling around to nearly all states having Mission congregations, visiting Swedish congregations of almost all denominations (see Waldenström 1890, 1906). It was first upon hearing Waldenström's report following his first trip to the West coast in 1889

that SEMCo decided to appoint travelling preachers to visit the territories of California, Washington and Oregon (YB90).

The interest of the sister denominations in each other is further manifest by the exchange of representatives at annual conventions, a student and pastor exchange program initiated in 1920, the representation at each other's annual conventions and greetings sent back and forth as recorded in the minutes, the cooperative mission programs particularly in China, and the visits to America by Swedish Covenant pastors. Among these may be included, besides Waldenström, C. J. Nyvall, F. Mangs and others (see Appendix A)¹⁰.

In 1921, with the proposed merger of three contingents of Swedish Mission congregations coming to a vote, and with the necessity of initiating programs aimed at keeping the denomination's youth within the church, plans were laid for a united effort involving several Covenant denominations in Scandinavia and America together to develop Sunday-school lesson and youth materials (see Section 3.7). The Swedish denominations, distressed over the decrease in the number of hours that Christianity was being taught in the Swedish public schools, readily agreed to the cooperative effort. Olga Lindborg, SEMCo Sunday-school secretary, was sent to Sweden to help prepare and organize the work which resulted in material offered the American congregations in both Swedish and English versions.

The nationalistic sentiments of the Swedish Mission Covenant in America remained on a high level as witnessed by the greetings sent King Gustav V upon his visit to America in 1926 (YB26:171). The spirit of cooperation between the two Covenants reached its peak in the same year with the arrival in America of the SMF pastors' chorus. But with the era of immigration coming rapidly to a close and the gradual assimilation of the SEMCo constituency well under way, the state of dependency of the early American Covenant was no longer so great.

3.9.4 Focus of Attention

To whom did the Covenant direct its outreach? SEMCo could have decided very early to disperse with its Swedish cultural and national ties, encourage pastors to become fluent in English and evangelize the general American population in the ways of the Mission Friends and in accordance to their religious heritage.

This, however, was not the case, and as has been mentioned in various instances earlier (in connection with the distribution of SEMCo congregations (Section 3.5), in Section 3.9.1 and as is seen in Appendix A), the focus of attention of the domestic activities of SEMCo centered around their own national origins, that is, the Swedish immigrant settlers, and their kindred. This is perhaps best attested to by a single factor, namely language, which for all practical purposes served as a catalyst and natural boundary for the denomination. But, other factors played a role as well, as exemplified by the support given the issue of abolition. On numerous accounts the annual convention records indicate resolutions in favor of the Anti-Saloon League and the Abolitionists' cause, a stance much in line with the then current position of the Covenant in Sweden. SEMCo went so far as to appoint representatives to the League's conventions (see YB90:40, 98:58, 01:115, 08:16, 17:122, 19:122, 20:117, 24:175).

On the domestic scene, there are but a few incidents during Period I of SEMCo evangelistic efforts taking place outside the parameters of the Swedish population in America and perhaps even fewer instances of contact with an "un-churched" American population. Perhaps the earliest recorded (SEMCo) effort to evangelize among degenerate American "caucasians" took place on the Alaskan mission field, of which it is recorded that the depraved condition of the gold miners made it necessary to preach to them in their own language in an effort to bring about repentance (YB99:31).

It is not until very late in the period that mention is made in an organizational context of the necessity to "reach out to non-Swedish speaking persons in the Covenant surrounds and embody them in our congregations" (YB30:5). Prior to this however some efforts were made to serve the Swedish-Finns in Wisconsin and Michigan with three congregations organized and seven pastors serving (YB98:11, YB99:17, YB07:123), and, still earlier, efforts were made to start a school among an Indian tribe in Minnesota, a project hampered by certain unfortunate circumstances on the Indian reservation (YB89). There were some attempts on the local congregational level to open doors to non-Swedes (YB30:5), but there is no indication on the organizational level of domestic attempts to extend its evangelical reach beyond the ethnic community.

There are also instances of refusing support to various issues. The Jewish cause was on more than one occasion not given official support at the annual conventions (YB05:95, 11:125, 12:111), and in 1914, the annual convention turned down a request for support for the Russian mission (YB14:127).

3.10 Language

Information concerning the problem of language within the Covenant is not all that abundant, and therefore, any attempt to deal with the matter cannot be too comprehensive. From the sources available, primarily official records, two dimensions of the issue emerge which should be place in perspective to the other issues. On the one hand, there is the state of affairs in the congregations, including the Sunday-school and youth activities, and on the other hand, the awareness of the situation among the leaders, and the measures taken on the organizational level in response to the situation. On the congregational level the issue was 'which language was being used', and on the organizational level 'which language should be used'.

Unfortunately, there is little specific information regarding the use of English in the worship services until late in Period I (see Section 4.9.2). It can be assumed, however, that the use of English in Covenant circles was not uniform on account of the relatively long time-spread of the emigration from Sweden; as pointed out earlier, by the end of Period I, the earliest organized among SEMCo's congregations were already 60 years old (Section 3.5.3). Presumably, the older congregations had progressed farther along the road to Americanization than had younger congregations.

The problems were brought to the attention of the convention delegates already in 1895, at which time a committee was appointed to study means to encourage the establishment of congregational schools in which the children and youth of the congregations would receive instruction in the language of their fathers and in the Christian religion. In 1896, the committee reported that the children and youth of the denomination were not versed in the Swedish language and that this neglect, due in part to the lack of Swedish day-schools, "...greatly impairs Sunday school activity and makes instruction in the Christian religion virtually impossible", furthermore, that this omission was to blame for the "...presence of youth...many of whom do not understand a sermon in Swedish" (YB96:105). Swedish day-schools such as recommended by the committee had already been in operation for a number of years in some areas (YB91:6), and in the following years, many more were reported (see Section 3.8.1.3).

But it wasn't until many years later that the increased use of English within the denomination was brought to the attention of the leaders and the conference delegates, and measures were taken to resolve the situation. Between 1915 and 1920, the Yearbook records indicate an increasing awareness of the problem among the leadership and events external to the Covenant provided added urgency to the need to effectuate a change-over.

Following a study of the denominational Sunday school activities, it was noted that Swedish only was used in 63 percent of the cases and Swedish and English in 37 percent of the Sunday-schools (YB17:113), and the need for English Sunday-school material due to the increasing use of English is recorded (YB18:31 f). Later, among the Covenant youth organizations, the predominance of English is noted; as few as 4 percent used Swedish only; 23 percent English only; 22 percent mainly Swedish and 53 percent mainly English (YB21:38 f).

However much the problems experienced by the Sunday-school and youth organizations were brought to the attention of the congregational representatives and denominational leaders, the single event which most influenced the impending transition was World War I and the special kinds of problems it entailed for the immigrants and their organizations in America. The effects of anti-German sentiments were felt on the congregational level by the decision in the state of Iowa to forbid the public use of all languages except English (CA G-4), which resulted in a plea from within the Covenant for English pastors to be sent to Iowa congregations (ibid. Nyvall letter). Furthermore, permission had to be secured from the U.S. Government to print Bibles in Swedish, as importing them from Sweden was both difficult and expensive. Thus, for these reasons, and because the American Swedes were not particularly pleased with the new 1917 Swedish translation of the Bible available from Sweden considerations were given to print a Bible which would meet their own needs (YB19:23).

In addition to the measures already mentioned, many others were implemented in an effort to resolve the language issue. In 1918, a committee was assigned to develop a Covenant songbook which was to include both Swedish and English hymns (YB18:139; YB19:26 f; YB21:28), and a Youth committee was started, which resulted in a youth publication in both English and Swedish (YB19:118). In 1922, the Covenant publications committee reported that the larger share of books being sold was in English. Finally, in 1928 it was decided that the work of the annual conventions should be conducted in English (YB28:174), and the 1929 delegates voted 131 to 47 in favor of changing the official language of the convention to English. The minutes of the annual convention were recorded in English for the first time in 1930 along with the switch-over to English.

On the ministerial front, those preparing for the ministry were to be competent in both English and Swedish (YB18:132 f), but it was first in 1920, 25 years after the reports of deficiencies in knowledge of Swedish among the children, that recommendations were made to secure teachers "proficient in both the English and Swedish Bibles" and actions taken to "Americanize" the Bible department at North Park (YB20:131). The earlier complaints of pastors with a poor knowledge of Swedish shifted by 1929 to

problems of congregations without pastors and pastors without congregations due in part to poor salaries, but also to the language problems, in particular for the older pastors who were not readily accepted due to their accent or poor English (YB29:5 f).

On the whole, the early leaders of the Covenant were quite strongly in favor of, and supportive of, measures which ensured the maintenance of the native language of the denomination. The irony of the situation lies in the awareness of all involved that time was not on their side. As recorded in the proceedings of the annual conventions, certain actions were taken to assure the continuity of the Swedish language; but perhaps more indicative of the position of the leaders and the denomination in general is that measures which could have accelerated the acceptance of English are conspicuously absent from the records until quite late in the period.

3.11 Summary: Period I

Following the scheme of study as outlined in Chapter 2, the objective of this chapter has been to examine various aspects of Covenant identity and environment for the period 1885 to 1930. In this section the various aspects touched upon will be related to the meanings applied to identity and environment, beginning first with identity.

The identity of an organization was described in terms of its mechanical attributes, that is, the strains of identity which arise out of the processes occurring within the organization itself or resulting from the environment in which the organization exists, and in terms of deliberate attributes which comprise the objectives and means of achieving the objectives, and the programs of the organization.

Considering the deliberate facets of Covenant identity, it was pointed out that from the very beginning, as stated in the records of the constitutive meeting of the denomination, the focus of attention was to become the Swedish immigrants who had found their way to America. Plans were immediately drawn up for supplying the denomination with trained pastors, for sending out travelling representatives, preachers and evangelists to establish new congregations and to support existings pockets of Mission Friends. This domestic mission activity was carried out vigorously for many years and included scores of pastors including several from the Covenant in Sweden. Various benevolent institutions including hospitals, convalescent homes, home's for the elderly, childrens' homes and immigrant homes were founded and supported by the denomination to care for various needs of the constituency and larger Swedish community. Also

numerous schools were established which provided for education and vocational training on several levels and were used, and indeed encouraged by the Covenant leadership, as instruments for maintaining and perpetuating the Swedish language especially among the children and youth but also for the pastoral candidates. Later in the period, when it became apparent to the leaders that the "Americanization" of the denomination was already well under way, efforts were made to organize childrens' and youth activities on the denominational level. Sunday-school materials were developed, bilingual publications augmented the wealth of papers already available to and printed within the Swedish circle.

It was determined quite early that all efforts would be made to keep the Covenant intact and independent of outside influence. The "foreign elements" of the American denomination with a leaning for the Swedish Mission Societies were shrugged off quite early and not until toward the end of the period was there talk of extending the scope of the Covenant to include others in their midst.

In considering the mechanical aspects of Covenant identity, attention will focus on the achievements of the deliberate efforts to extend the influence of the denomination. The items included here concern mainly the congregational and membership statistics as they are reported to the denominational headquarters and recorded in the denominational documents.

This aspect of Covenant identity may be characterized as follows: Geographically, the denomination expanded from its initial boundaries of 8 Mid-western states to include, by the end of the period, congregations in 10 states and 4 provinces in Canada in the Western region and congregations in 11 Eastern region states. In terms of congregations, the Core region -in particular Minnesota and Illinois- showed greatest gains and distribution of Covenant gatherings, followed by the Western region where expansion got under way after 1900. Throughout all of Period I, the Eastern region is characterized by few gains in member congregations despite the presence of many associate-member Swedish Mission churches in the region. It is in this region, however, that congregations are first established in states of very limited Swedish-born population. Although the recruitment of congregations to the Covenant remained fairly consistent until the end of the period, the establishment of Mission Congregations, on the whole, decreased sharply after 1914. In terms of congregations, the overall rural and urban distribution was fairly even, but with large regional variation. In consideration of the distribution of Covenant membership, however, the denomination was primarily urban. During the period, the size structure of the congregations tended toward larger congregations as is also seen in the average congregational membership increases from 83 in 1900 to 149 in 1930. For the entire period, the predominance of women among the Covenant constituency is

apparent, though not to the degree as was observed to be the case in Chicago in the early Mission congregations.

The environment of the Covenant was defined as the arena constituting the object of Covenant activities and which forms the source of recruits to the denomination. In the beginning, the environment consisted largely of the Swedish Mission Friend congregations in the mid-western states. Along with the westward migration of the settlers and tied also to the organized efforts of the denomination in domestic mission work, the boundaries of the environment expanded to include more generally the Swedish population in America as was seen, for instance, in the similarities between the settlement pattern of the Swedish immigrants and the spread of Covenant congregations in the areas of Swedish population concentrations. By the same token it might be stated that the environment was to a degree dependent on the influx of emigrants from Sweden not only for gaining members but also as a channel for pastors, teachers, missionaries and representatives from the Covenant in Sweden and for materials such as Bibles, songbooks and certain publications sent from Sweden. Sweden was a facet of Covenant environment, furthermore, in the sense that representatives and leaders of the American Covenant often travelled to Sweden for evangelistic purposes or to gain knowledge about certain aspects of the activities of Swedish forerunner to the denomination in America.

The Swedish texture of Covenant environment is further exemplified by the denominations with which SEMCo retained relations through the period. Except for an early and shortlasting courtship with the American Congregationalists, the external relations and cooperative efforts maintained on a formal level with other religious bodies had to do with other Swedish denominations. Until quite late in the period, however, these relations appear to be limited to denominations emerging out of the religious revivals of 19th century Sweden, including several in America and SMF in Sweden as has been mentioned; the latter being perhaps the most significant in forming the structure of SEMCo environment on the organizational level.

Furthermore, in a legalistic sense the many associate-member congregations connected to the Covenant via the district conferences comprised a part of the environment in as much as these gatherings were not actually members of the Covenant, but were either independent congregations or connected to another denomination. The significance of these congregations will be seen in the examination of Period II.

At the same time that the Swedish texture of the environmental structure was supported by the continual arrival of Swedish emigrants and by the persistence of the Swedish language, it was beginning to be threatened by Americanization tendencies which became especially visible on the denominational level just prior to and during World War I. During the

twenties, immigration figures began declining and, within the Covenant the establishment of congregations slowed with few being added by the end of the period.

The interrelationship of the aspects of Covenant identity and environment as described in Chapter 3 and as summarized here in this section will be analyzed in Chapter 6 in conjunction with the results of Chapters 4 and 5.

4.0 Period II: 1930-1960

4.1 Introduction

The review of membership and congregational data for Period I showed that SEMCo was comprised almost exclusively of congregations situated in areas of Swedish emigrant population concentrations and that denominational activities were concentrated around meeting the needs of the Swedish settlers in these areas in various capacities. Despite efforts from within the denomination to ensure the continuity of the emigrant quality of the Covenant particularly through the maintenance of the language, the unity of the Covenant which was supported by the presence of the Swedish language, was being challenged in the latter third of the period.

By the end of Period I/onset of Period II, the first generation Covenant leaders were gradually making their exits from the arena of active participation in the denomination on various levels (see Section 1.5). These now-retiring members, who had been instrumental in chartering and developing the activities of the organization, set out to accomplish their goals very much within the limits of their own particular cultural and national heritage; to achieve a "...union among our believing fellow patriots here in America..." (Minutes 1885:4 ff). In so doing, the denomination, as with other denominations of similar cultural and ethnic backgrounds, existed to a large degree independent of the American population in general in terms of membership recruitment and in terms of certain institutional services. As such, SEMCo functioned as a bulwark of Swedish language and of Swedish socio-culture in America.

The continuity of SEMCo as an organization could theoretically have been maintained by any of three contingencies or combinations thereof: 1) continued immigration, 2) recruitment of second generation Swedes or Scandinavians in America, 3) recruitment from the ranks of Americans. The outcome of these three possibilities will be examined in Chapter 4, along with other factors, in an effort to determine alterations in the identity and environment of the Covenant.

4.2 Emigration and Re-migration Data

A review of emigration/re-migration statistics after 1930 reveals a drastic decrease in the number of emigrants from Sweden in comparison to comparable figures for Period I (Table 3.1), and a substantial increase in the number of Swedish emigrants returning to Sweden. The number of re-migrants to Sweden from America and Canada for many years actually exceeded the number going in the opposite direction, as indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Emigrants and Re-migrants to N. America:
1921 to 1960

Years	Emigrants		Re-migrants	
	U. S.	Canada	U. S.	Canada
1921-30	91,932	11,858	27,474	1,839
1931-40	6,884	349	27,248	2,887
1941-45	766	32	626	44
1946-50	12,027	4,295	6,180	457
1951-60	<u>22,685</u>	<u>10,171</u>	<u>14,201</u>	<u>2,016</u>
Totals				
1931-60	42,362	14,847	48,255	5,404

Source: Sveriges Officiella Statistik: Befolknings-
förändringar

During Period II, there occurred a net re-migration to Sweden from the United States of nearly 6,000 persons and a net emigration to Canada of some 8,000 Swedes. For the first ten years of the period, the number of emigrants returning to Sweden was nearly four times as great as the number emigrating to America from Sweden. Approximately the same number re-migrated between 1921 and 1930 (which is included for the sake of comparison), as between 1931 and 1940. Following World War II, which temporarily put a stop to the migration, the figure for emigrations reached a level higher than previously experienced during this 30-year period. It is difficult from the sources available to estimate the effect of the figures in Table 4.1 on Covenant membership development. It stands to reason, however, that the effect prior to 1945 would most likely have been evidenced in

membership losses due to the larger number of re-migrants leaving the country than emigrants arriving. After 1945, the fact of increased emigration to America counterbalanced by the disappearance of the Swedish language from all Swedish denominations (see Section 4.9.2) is most likely not to have resulted in any significant membership increases in these denominations.

Another factor to be considered in weighing the the effects of later emigrant arrivals on church membership development particularly with reference to the Swedish emigration and the Swedish denominations in America is the increasing secularization of the Swedish society. The likelihood of recruiting large numbers of Swedish emigrants to the religious bodies was certainly much less during Period II than it was in the decades prior

4.3 Covenant Data for Period II

4.3.1 Congregation and Membership Statistics

A numeric analysis of the denomination from 1930 to 1960 is presented in Table 4.2. The figures under "Total Congs." include all congregations recorded in the annual Covenant statistics. These are then divided into the associate congregations and tabulated separately in column "2", and the member congregations which are listed separately in column "3". The category "Total Members" (col. 4) represents the combined membership of all congregations included in the column "Total Congs.", and "Net Members" reflects only the members of the "Memb. Congs.". The "Net Members" (col. 5) category is given at five-year intervals and the average number of members per congregation (in parentheses) are based on this figure.

The overall figures for Period II show a total of 305 congregations added to the Covenant (col. 7), and after adjustments for congregations discontinuing their affiliation with the denomination (see Table 4.3), there remains a net increase of 230 congregations (see col.3). For comparative purposes, the membership increases resulting from the addition of 305 congregations based on averages (see Section 4.4.2) were just under 17,000 members. Allowing for the loss of membership due to discontinuing congregations, the result is a net gain of some 15,000 members. Thus, of the overall membership increase from 1930 to 1960 (col. 5), six out of ten were due to congregations joining the denomination, the remaining share was recruited on the local congregational level.

Table 4.2 Congregation and Membership Statistics: 1930 to 1960.

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Congrs. Joining	
	Total Congrs.	Assoc. Congrs.	Membr. Congrs.	Total Members	Net Members	Congrs. Added	Total Accum.	8 New	9 Assoc.
1930	407	128	279	41,829	31,756	1	315		1
1931	413	139	274	41,838	(114)	2	317		
1932	421	137	284	42,774		4	321		2
1933	423	139	284	43,303		1	322	1	
1934	420	142	278	43,374		1	323	1	
1935	430	161	269	44,153	31,712	9	332	4	4
1936	437	156	281	44,538	(118)	11	343	3	6
1937	441	153	288	44,969		6	349	2	4
1938	441	147	294	44,930		7	356	2	5
1939	440	146	294	45,014		4	360	1	3
1940	450	153	297	45,634	34,434	11	371	4	6
1941	453	151	302	46,617	(116)	5	376	3	2
1942	459	150	309	47,592		9	385	7	1
1943	463	144	324	48,098		8	393	4	4
1944	467	145	322	48,682		9	402	4	5
1945	468	128	340	49,003	39,946	14	416	2	10
1946	468	108	360	49,428	(117)	15	431	8	7
1947	471	96	367	49,966		12	443	6	6
1948	475	86	389	50,168		19	462	6	12
1949	475	63	412	50,009		30	492	6	19
1950	480	54	426	51,264	47,435	17	509	9	5
1951	489	55	434	51,850	(111)	9	518	2	7
1952	496	48	448	53,093		11	529	8	3
1953	506	45	461	52,913		18	547	13	3
1954	515	40	475	53,608		15	562	9	4
1955	520	38	482	54,258	52,209	13	575	8	4
1956	523	36	487	55,152	(108)	9	584	6	3
1957	525	31	494	56,309		11	595	9	1
1958	526	30	496	57,216		8	603	6	1
1959	529	23	506	58,371		11	614	6	4
1960	<u>531</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>509</u>	<u>59,339</u>	<u>57,891</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>619</u>	<u>5</u>	<u> </u>
					(114)				
Total						305		146	131
Net									
Change	124	106	230	17,510	26,135		305		

The number of member congregations actually dropped on two occasions during Period II; the first time come in 1934 - 1935, from 284 to 269 congregations, and again in 1944, by two congregations. Congregation membership increased overall, albeit at a much slower pace in the beginning than at the end of the period. There occurred an overall relative increase in member congregations and in member-congregation membership by 83 percent. The sharpest increases in both categories occurred after 1945.

The number of associate congregations reached an all-time high of 161 in 1935, decreasing gradually thereafter until 1960 when only 22 are included among the total congregations. At most, the associate-member congregations accounted for 37 percent of the congregations recorded in the Covenant statistics. The majority of these belonged to the Eastern Missionary Society with its approx. 70 congregations, and retained their associate status until the latter half of the 1940's. Of all the associate congregations, EMS accounted for 69 of 128 in 1930, 65 of 153 in 1940, 23 of 54 in 1950, and 11 of 22 in 1959 (figures not available for 1960). As will be discussed more at depth in the following (Section 4.3.2), and as was observed in the discussion of Period I, many of the associate-member congregations later altered their status and became member congregations in their own right.

The column "Accum. Total" is a tabulation of the accumulated number of congregations to be formally accepted as member congregations into the denomination. A comparison of this figure with the corresponding number of member congregations for any particular year gives an indication of the number of congregations which dropped out or were discontinued for any reason. Such a comparison is made at 5-year intervals and presented in Table 4.3 below.

The "Congrs. Added" column shows a year-by-year account for the period with a total of 305 congregations being granted membership status at the annual delegates' convention as recorded in the minutes of the proceedings. The congregations included here are primarily from three different categories: 1) formerly associate-member congregations, 2) newly established congregations, and 3) independent congregations or congregations having belonged to other denominations. The category "new" might include either newly organized groups, former preaching stations or congregations formed due to mergers or divisions. Also included in this category, and which is new for Period II, is the joining of indigenous American (non-Scandinavian) congregations. The first such church became affiliated with the California Missionary Association in 1936 (YB36:101), and joined the Covenant 12 years later (YB48:147).

Of the 305 congregations entering into formal membership between 1930 and 1960, nearly 70 percent of the admissions took place after 1945. The most intense 5-year period of congregation increase occurred between 1945 and 1949, with 90 being added.

What is not classified here, mainly due to the difficulties involved in gathering relevant information, are the congregations possibly coming from ethnic denominations of Scandinavian origins. The integration of other Swedish denominations (see Olsson 1982) into American religious bodies may have had the effect of threatening the particular identity of individual congregations, an identity which might have been maintained through association with a denomination of corresponding national roots¹.

As near as can be determined from the figures recorded and presented in Table 4.2, a total of some 74 congregations discontinued or withdrew their membership from the Covenant over the 30-year period (col. 6 minus col. 3)². An attempt has been made, based on Table 4.2, to tally these congregations at 5-year intervals in Table 4.3. By decades, from lowest to highest, the 1940's show the lowest number of discontinued congregations totalling of 9, the 1950's show three times as many (27), and the 1930's even more (38).

Table 4.3 Discontinued Congregations at
5-Year Intervals: 1930 to 1960

Year	Accumulated Number Dropped	Change over Previous Period
1930	36	
1935	63	27
1940	74	11
1945	76	2
1950	83	7
1955	93	10
1960	<u>110</u>	<u>17</u>
Net		
Change:	74	
Total:		74

The breakdown reveals some interesting results with reference to congregational growth and decline as recorded in Table 4.2. For example, while 1930 to 1935 is the only interval showing sustained increase in the number of associate congregations, it also shows the only decline in the number of member congregations for the period. A closer review, however, shows that the situation is not due to member congregations altering their status to associate member. From 1945 to 1949 several occurrences are observed, for instance, the least overall increase in congregations (col. 1), the greatest decline in associate congregations (col. 2), and little membership increase (col. 4). Yet, at the same time the greatest increases for any 5-year span occurred in the figures for total congregations (col. 3), net membership (col. 5), and congregations added (col. 6). There is a simple explanation for this, namely, that between 1945 and 1949, the sharp increase in member congregations was due to a flood of associate congregations requesting full member status (compare col. 9; a more detailed account of this will be given below). The effect of including associate congregations in the tabulations of columns 1 and 2 (as was the practice in compiling the figures recorded in the Covenant Yearbooks from year to year) resulted in little or no change in total congregations and corresponding membership figures (columns 3 and 4) as the associate congregations altered their status to full member congregations.

The 5-year period of greatest membership increase, 1955 to 1960, was also a period with a relatively high frequency of new congregations joining (col. 8) and a low rate of former associate-member congregations (col. 9) joining. This should be considered in conjunction with the relatively completed transition to English (see Section 4.9.2) in all congregations and to a concerted effort on the part of the denomination to bring new members into the congregations (see Section 4.8). A goal set early in the 1930's for winning 100,000 souls (see Section 4.8) had minimal effect as seen in the net membership increase between 1930 and 1945 of only 8,000.

4.3.2 Congregational Recruitment Patterns

As was observed in Table 4.2, the largest increases in member congregations occurred during the 1940's, with the addition of 132 congregations, followed closely by the 1950's with 127 congregations and 46 in the 1930's. Furthermore, as indicated above, the congregations joining during this period belonged to three categories: newly organized congregations, formerly associate-member congregations and independent congregations. A breakdown of these categories is presented in Table 4.4.

The additions are listed according to region and state (left-most column), in increments of 5 years (top row) and according to category (new, former associate-member, other). Furthermore, the additions are tabulated into sub-totals and totals for each state and region (right-most column) and for each 5-year period and category (in 3 separate rows). The contents of this table are also broken down by region, category and 5-year period in Table 4.5, which, in addition, includes figures of the number of congregations to organize during Period II for comparative purposes.

In general, few congregations joined the Covenant during the first 5 years of Period II (see 5-year totals at bottom of table). The 5-year period with most additions is 1945 to 1949, when 90 congregations joined. In total, 305 congregations were added to the roster of Covenant member congregations, as has been seen earlier, during the 30 years of Period II.

By region (see also Table 4.5), the greatest increase occurred in the Core region with 66 "new", 46 "associated" and 19 "other" congregations joining for a total of 131, or 43 percent of the total for the period. Two states, Minnesota and Illinois, accounted for nearly half (64 of 131) of the increase. The category "new" comprised half of the 131 congregations in this region, and were divided among 7 states. A large portion of the associated congregations and "other" were from Minnesota and Wisconsin. Except for the first 5 years, the frequency of additions in this region is fairly evenly distributed over the period as a whole.

In the Western region, two-thirds (65) of the additions are "new", one-fourth (24) are associated and the rest (9) "other". In other words, the Core and Western regions had the same number of "new" additions during Period II. Washington, California and the Canadian provinces show the greatest increases, both in terms of "new" and associated. Time-wise, the increase in this region is not as even as was noticed in the Core region; in the major part of the additions come in the latter half of the period, and especially in the 1950's when 45 "new" congregations were added out of a total of 65 for the period.

In contrast to the other two regions, the Eastern region is characterized by the majority of associated congregations joining throughout the entire period. Apart from this relatively large category, only 15 other additions are reported, all "new" ones. From 1945 to 1949, it is seen that 35 associate joined out of the total of 61 associate for the period. Most of these, as has been indicated, were formerly Swedish Congregationalist and other independent congregations associated with the Covenant through the Eastern Missionary Society. And as is observed in the table, not much happened in the way of additions in this region prior to the middle of the 1940's.

Table 4.4 Joining Congregations by State and Region:
N = New, A = Associated, O = Other

REGION STATE	Congrs. 1930	1930- 1934			1935- 1939			1940- 1944			1945- 1949			1950- 1954			1955- 1960			SUB- TOTALS			TOTAL
		N	A	O	N	A	O	N	A	O	N	A	O	N	A	O	N	A	O	N	A	O	
CORE																							
Minnesota	76			1	3	3		8	5	1	4	5	5	2		3	5		3	22	13	13	48
Wisconsin	14			1	2	2	1	1	1		3	1		1	1				1	7	5	3	15
Michigan	22					3			2		3	2		4			3	3		10	10	0	20
Illinois	40	1			2	1		2			2		1	2	1		6			15	0	1	18
Indiana	5			1																0	0	1	1
Iowa	18				1				1		3	1		1	1					5	3	0	8
Nebraska	18	1	1		1	1			1		2			1	2					5	5	0	10
Missouri	1																			0	0	0	0
Kansas	15					2			1			1	1	2	2		2			2	8	1	11
SUB TOTAL	209	2	1	3	9	12	1	11	11	1	17	10	7	13	7	3	14	5	4	66	46	19	131
Western																							
Canada	15				2	6		3			4	1		6			5			20	7	0	27
N.Dakota	0							1									1			2	0	0	2
S.Dakota	4		2				1				1	1				1				1	3	2	6
Montana	3													1						1	0	0	1
Washington	10			1				2			1	2	1	5	3		6			14	5	2	21
Oregon	1				1				1					1						2	2	0	4
Idaho	2																			0	0	0	0
Wyoming	1							1								1				1	0	1	2
Colorado	4													2			1			3	0	0	3
California	17								1	1	2	4		7	2	2	9			18	7	3	28
Arizona	0							1			1									2	0	0	2
Texas	0						1							1						1	0	1	2
SUB TOTAL	57	0	2	1	3	6	2	8	2	1	9	9	1	23	5	4	22	0	0	65	24	9	98
Eastern																							
Maine	0											1					2			0	3	0	3
New Hamp.	0								1											0	1	0	1
Vermont	0																			0	0	0	0
Conn.	1				2			2			6			3			2			0	15	0	15
Mass.	1								2			12		1						1	14	0	15
Rhode Is.	0										4				2					0	6	0	6
New York	4										1	4					1	2		2	6	0	8
Pennsyl.	4				2						7				1		2			0	12	0	12
New Jersey	1											1			1					0	2	0	2
Ohio	1													3	2					3	2	0	5
Wash.DC	0							1												1	0	0	1
Virginia	0																1			1	0	0	1
Tennessee	0													1						1	0	0	1
Alabama	1										1									2	0	0	2
Florida	1							1						1			2			4	0	0	4
SUB TOTAL	14	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	5	0	2	35	0	6	9	0	4	8	0	15	61	0	76
TOTALS	280	2	3	4	12	22	3	22	18	2	28	54	8	42	21	7	40	13	4	146	131	28	305
5 YEAR TOTALS			9			37			42			90			70			57					
10 YEAR TOTALS						46						132						127					

Table 4.5 Joining and Newly Organized Congregations by Category and Region: 5-year Periods

Years	New*			Associate			Other			New**	
	Core	West	East	Core	West	East	Core	West	East	Total	Org.
1930-34	2	0	0	1	2	0	3	1	0	9	12
1935-39	9	3	0	12	6	4	1	2	0	37	14
1940-44	11	8	3	11	2	5	1	1	0	42	26
1945-49	17	9	2	10	9	35	7	1	0	90	33
1950-54	13	23	6	7	5	9	3	4	0	70	46
1955-60	<u>14</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>33</u>
Totals	66	65	15	46	24	61	19	9	0	305	164
Core	131										
Western	98										
Eastern	76										

* Congregations joining within 4-5 years of organizing.

** Congregations organizing during the period.

Note: There is a discrepancy between the totals of (*) and (**) due to the fact that not all newly organized congregations joined immediately or within 4-5 years of starting up. Furthermore, some of the congregations recorded in the table as "new" actually were organized in the latter part of Period I.

In summing up Tables 4.4 and 4.5, four states within the Core region account for 101 of the 131 additions: Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. In the Western region, two states, California and Washington and the Canadian provinces account for 76 of the total 98 additions there. And, in the East, as mentioned above, 62 of the 76 additions come from EMS states, that is to say, Covenant strong-holds from Period I. These states, from which come nearly 80 percent of all Period II additions, are also the states with the highest Swedish-born population according to a 1930 census (Nelson 1943 map 8).

Furthermore, considering only the "new" additions according to states, a pattern similar to the one above is discerned. In both the Core and Western regions, the ranking of states from highest to lowest according to "new" additions corresponds directly with the state-by-state ranking of the

number of second-generation Swedes (ibid). The East is an exception to this pattern in that few "new" congregations are started in Covenant regions (2 congregations in Long Island, New York, and one in Massachusetts), and efforts were concentrated to other states having neither Covenant activities nor large concentrations of Swedish immigrants. Congregations got underway in Alabama and Florida due to the presence of Swedish contingents there (Olsson 1962 p. 588) The additions seem to peak between 1945 and 1954, with over one-half (160) of the total additions joining during this 10-year span.

Overall, the figures show that of all the congregations which at one time during Period II were member congregations of the Covenant Church, 164 became organized as congregations during this period. Nearly 90 percent of these 164 (143) joined the denomination within 4-5 years of becoming organized. Nearly half (79) of the 164 got started during the 1950's, 59 during the 1940's, and 16 in the 1930's.

4.3.3 Congregation Size-Structure

The congregation size-spread for the member congregations is relatively stable for the entire period. In other words, the net growth is evenly spread and, with a couple of exceptions, does not noticeably affect the percentages. One exception is the smaller congregations, the category 1-25, which fluctuates to some degree throughout the period and shows an overall proportionate decrease from 45 percent in 1930 to 37 percent in 1960. Factors affecting this fluctuation would include the congregations withdrawing or being removed from the Covenant (see Table 4.3) which, to a large extent, fall into this category, plus the effect of the category "new" among the additions for the period, which account for nearly half of all congregations joining (Table 4.4). This latter category had an average membership per congregation of 32 members. The averages for the other categories comprising the additions are associated, 82 members per congregation and "other", 48 members per congregation. Although these averages fall under the averages for "member congregations" (see Table 4.2 column 5) as a whole, it is difficult to determine from these figures the extent to which increases in the congregational size-structure (Table 4.6) are accounted for by the size-patterns of congregations joining the denomination or by increases in congregational membership on the local level. Considering all congregations under 100 members, the percentage remains very stable (around 66 percent) for the entire period.

Table 4.6 Congregational Size at 10-Year Intervals: Member and Associate-Member Congregations

Year	1-25		26-50		51-100		101-200		201-500		500-		Total	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N*	(%)
Member														
1930	62	(22)	63	(23)	54	(19)	50	(18)	37	(13)	9	(3)	279	(99)
1940	48	(16)	70	(24)	79	(27)	49	(16)	35	(12)	11	(4)	297	(100)
1950	84	(20)	89	(21)	117	(27)	73	(17)	47	(11)	13	(3)	426	(99)
1960	72	(14)	115	(23)	149	(29)	97	(19)	63	(12)	11	(2)	509	(99)
Associate														
1930	20	(16)	41	(32)	28	(22)	22	(17)	11	(9)	1		128	(100)
1940	43	(28)	35	(23)	40	(26)	22	(14)	10	(7)	1		153	(99)
1950	20	(37)	13	(24)	10	(19)	7	(13)	3	(6)	1		54	(99)
1960	10	(45)	3	(14)	6	(27)	1	(5)	2	(9)	0		22	(100)

*Missing congregations included in the totals: Member 1930:4; 1940:5; 1950:3; 1960:2; Associate 1930:5; 1940:1; 1950:1.

The considerable decrease in the number of associate-member congregations is noticed in all size categories. Here, the percentages of congregations having 100 and fewer members increases from 56 % in 1930 to 86 % in 1960, which is perhaps an indication that the smaller congregations remained associated to a greater extent than did those with over 100 members. Furthermore, of the 22 associate-member congregations in 1960, 10 belong to the 1-25 category.

4.4 Urban and Rural Distribution of Congregations and Members

The urban and rural distribution of Covenant congregations and membership (Canada not included) are presented in Table 4.6. Both member and associate-member congregations are included in the table and adjustments cannot be made for the presence of the latter since these are not distinguished from the former in any way.

TABLE 4.7 Congregations and Members: Rural and Urban by State

	Congregations			Members		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
	N	(%)	N	N	(%)	N
Minnesota	87	26 (30)	61	8,488	5,787 (68)	2,701
Wisconsin	31	9 (29)	22	1,397	484 (35)	913
C Michigan	25	14 (56)	11	2,362	1,837 (78)	525
O Illinois	45	41 (91)	4	8,640	8,471 (98)	169
R Indiana	5	3 (60)	2	242	147 (61)	95
E Iowa	20	7 (35)	13	1,912	947 (50)	965
Nebraska	22	5 (23)	17	2,142	697 (33)	1,445
Missouri	1	1		161	161	
Kansas	24	7 (29)	17	1,789	517 (29)	1,272
Sub-totals	260	113 (43)	147	27,133	19,048 (70)	8,085
S.Dakota	10		10	295		295
W Montana	3	3		126	126	
E Washington	12	8 (67)	4	1,593	1,368	225
S Oregon	4	2 (50)	2	407	279 (68)	128
T Idaho	1	1		41	41	
E Wyoming	1	1		19	19	
R Colorado	4	3 (75)	1	373	298 (80)	75
N California	20	14 (70)	6	3,252	2,496 (77)	756
Texas	1		1	20		20
Sub-totals	56	32 (57)	24	6,126	4,627 (76)	1,499
New Hamp.	1	1		112	112	
Vermont	3	3		116	116	
E Conn.	21	9 (43)	12	1,943	1,362 (70)	581
A Mass.	22	19 (86)	3	3,418	3,157 (92)	261
S Rhode Is.	6	5 (83)	1	642	602 (94)	40
T New York	11	11		2,495	2,495	
E Pennsylv.	19	10 (53)	9	1,204	923 (77)	284
R New Jersey	4	4		302	302	
N Ohio	2	2		434	434	
Alabama	1		1	25		25
Florida	1	1		31	31	
Sub-totals	91	65 (71)	26	10,722	9,534 (89)	1,188
TOTALS	407	210 (52)	197	43,981	33,209 (76)	10,772

Source: United States Federal Census of Religious Bodies: 1936.

The overall figures point to a rather balanced congregational distribution, while the regional and state figures show broad variation. The situation is somewhat different for Covenant membership as a whole, which is 76 percent urban and 24 percent rural. Membership variation by region and state is not as broad as is seen for the distribution of congregations.

The Core region is the only region with a predominance of rural congregations. Within this region, the major exceptions are the states of Illinois, which is 91 percent urban, followed by Michigan and Indiana, the three states which together comprise the industrial hub of the Core Region. The agricultural areas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas are, predictably, characterized by the predominance of rural congregations. The membership distribution of the Core region is urban, falling just short of the figures for the Covenant overall. Only three states, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Kansas, show an urban membership of less than 35 percent.

The Western region is perhaps the most uniform of the three regions, and the region with a congregation and membership distribution most nearly representative of the Covenant in general (the absence of the predominantly rural Canadian congregations is a factor here). The Western region membership is to a large degree located in the coastal states of Washington and California which, together with the Canadian provinces, experienced increases in the westward migration of many Swedish settlers and the arrival of many Swedish immigrants towards the end of Period I/beginning of Period II.

The Eastern region is solidly urban and displays the highest figures of the three regions in both categories. The state-wise variation however, is somewhat greater than was observed in the Western region. Connecticut and Pennsylvania have the lowest figures of all states in both categories, but in terms of membership still are 70-75 percent urban. Particularly many of the EMS states show membership distribution figures of between 90 and 100 percent.

A general observation regarding the overall distribution is that the development within the Covenant is toward urbanization. In the Western and Eastern regions, where the Covenant underwent rapid geographical expansion both in Period I and Period II, the congregations and their membership patterns are urban to a greater degree than is seen in the Core region on the whole.

4.5 Covenant Demographic Data

4.5.1 Age Distribution

In the early 1940's, Covenant President T. W. Anderson commissioned a study of the Covenant for the purpose of determining the age distribution of the denomination. Included in the survey population were all member and associate-member congregations (numbering 443) comprising some 45,000 individuals. Responses were received from 301 congregations, 68 percent of the population, including data on 32,508 individuals (71 percent)(Kullberg 1941, CQ 1941, vol 1, Nr. 4).

Returns percentages (see Table 4.9) were lowest from the East Coast states with 41 percent of the congregations responding. Highest was Kansas with 88 percent. One explanation for the low participation from the East might be the fact that 66 of the 70 EMS congregations at the time were related to the Covenant only as associate-member congregations.

In the survey report published in 1941, the averages for the age groups are tallied by state, conference and denomination for the entire Covenant. In addition, the age groups are plotted against the general U. S. population according to the census of 1930. The ratio of the Covenant membership to the U. S. population is also given as an indication of actual size of each age group relative to the anticipated figure, were the age categories identical in all cases.

Certain data from the study were recalculated for the purposes of the present study and appear together with results published elsewhere (CQ 1941) in Table 4.8 along with additional, related information. Percentages for each age group are given for the denomination (based on the 1941 study) and U. S. population (1930 census), along with an indication of the relation of the U. S. population distribution to the Covenant distribution which, if identical for any one age group, reads "1".

The two populations converge at approximately age 42. The proportion of those under age 42 is only slightly larger among the general population than for the Covenant. For the age groups over 42, however, the distribution of the general population differs increasingly from the Covenant distribution: the relative proportion of the age groups in the Covenant is between two and six times that of the general population for age groups 60 and older.

Table 4.8 Age Distribution in the Covenant:
1941

Age Group	Birth	%	%	US/Cov
		Members	US Pop	Relat.
10, 11, 12	1930	0.1	7.4	74.0
13, 14, 15	1927	1.0	7.2	7.2
16, 17, 18	1924	3.1	7.2	2.3
19, 20, 21	1921	4.6	6.6	1.4
22, 23, 24	1918	5.3	6.4	1.2
25, 26, 27	1915	5.1	6.0	1.2
28, 29, 30	1912	4.8	6.2	1.3
31, 32, 33	1909	4.5	5.2	1.2
34, 35, 36	1906	5.0	5.7	1.1
37, 38, 39	1903	4.7	5.4	1.1
40, 41, 42	1900	5.0	5.2	1.0
43, 44, 45	1897	5.4	4.6	.9
46, 47, 48	1894	5.6	4.1	.7
49, 50, 51	1890	5.5	3.8	.7
52, 53, 54	1888	5.0	3.4	.7
55, 56, 57	1885	5.0	3.0	.6
58, 59, 60	1881	4.8	2.9	.6
61, 62, 63	1879	3.8	2.0	.5
64, 65, 66	1876	4.0	1.8	.5
67, 68, 69	1873	3.7	1.5	.4
70, 71, 72	1870	3.7	1.4	.4
73, 74, 75	1867	3.5	1.1	.3
76, 77, 78	1864	2.6	0.9	.3
79, 80, 81	1861	2.0	0.3	.2
82, 83, 84	1858	1.2	0.3	.2

Source: Kullberg 1941 and Covenant Quarterly
1941; 1:4

The extent to which the 1941 age distribution of the Covenant reflects the age-distribution pattern of the Swedish emigrants is not certain since there are many intervening factors to take into account. However, the large proportion of older people in the Covenant as is indicated in Table 4.8 corresponds to what was stated previously concerning the arrival of the

Mission Friends among the earlier emigrants from Sweden, and is further supported by early establishment of Covenant congregations as was seen in Chapter 3. A possible explanation for the smaller proportion of lower age groups in the Covenant is that there were fewer children born into the Covenant due to a higher proportion of unmarried women within the denomination (see Section 3.2.2) than found in the general population. Furthermore, the fewer numbers of young people should also be considered with reference to the language issue (discussed at the end of Chapter 3), an issue which caused considerable concern within the Covenant, as they were afraid of losing the young people to American denominations.

Table 4.9 Age Distribution: Conferences

Conference	Median	Q1	Q3	% Response
Illinois	46	32	60	77
C Iowa	47	30	62	80
O Kansas	46	29	60	88
R Midwest	46	30	62	67
E Northwest	46	32	61	63
Lower Michigan	50	34	65	69
Upper Michigan	51	36	68	85
W California	47	30	62	77
E North Pacific	48	30	62	71
S South Dakota	51	36	60	67
T Canada	36	27	52	74
East Coast	47	33	62	41
Middle East	48	34	64	81

For the Covenant: Median: 47 years Q1: 32 Q3: 62

Source: Kullberg 1941

For comparative purposes, the median ages on the conference level (taken from the Kullberg study) have been arranged according to region in Table 4.9. With few exceptions, the conference and region figures are basically representative of the denomination as a whole. In the Core region, roughly comprising the conferences listed first in the table, the Michigan

constituency appears to be somewhat older than the other conference constituencies. The figures for the Canadian congregations point to a much younger constituency, no doubt due to the rather late arrival of Swedish emigrants here.

The compilation of results in the Kullberg survey includes the range of ages (number of years separating the youngest and oldest members) for each congregation. The average range for the denomination was 67 years and the range spread for the 301 congregations included in the study was between 14 and 86 years. Close scrutiny of the congregations with ranges of 50 years or less in terms of age distribution (average and median age, Q_1 and Q_3) reveals a tendency for these congregations to be quite small and, furthermore, shows a consolidation of these congregations into categories determined by the year of their establishment as congregations. Of the smaller congregations (having more narrow than average ranges), those established prior to 1900 have a higher than average (for the denomination) age distribution (in addition to the narrow range); those established after 1915 exhibit a lower than average age distribution (and a narrow range); the congregations established between 1900 and 1915 show a low to average age distribution (in addition to the narrow range). Thus, there is a strong tendency of the smaller congregations, independent of when they were started, to have a narrow age range; the older congregations have higher age averages, the younger congregations exhibit lower age averages. Of the 55 smaller congregations examined, only 6 exceptions were found to this pattern.

In relating this finding to the discussion of congregational size-structure (Section 4.3.3), the analysis of age distribution would tend support to the observation of a continual turn-over of smaller congregations, whereby the smaller congregations with older constituencies quite rapidly disappear due to the narrow age range of the members (i.e. absence of younger people) and are replaced at least to some extent by other smaller congregations with a younger constituency and equally narrow age ranges which, in due time, will also die out unless the cycle of narrow age-ranges is broken.

4.5.2 Sex Distribution

The review of the data on the sex distribution of the Swedish emigrants shows that from the onset of the mass migrations to the end of the emigrant period in 1930, the proportion of men to women favored the former. According to Runblom (1976), among the emigrants of the 1880's, the men

outweighed the women by 58 percent to 42 percent. During the following decade the percentages were more even but still favored the men by 53 to 47 percent. From 1921 to 1930 however, just prior to Period II, the proportion of men to women was nearly double; 66 percent men, 34 percent women.

The only available figures relevant for Period II and the Covenant as a whole are found in the Federal Census of Religious Bodies for 1936 when the Covenant was 41 percent male and 59 percent female. This is a male to female relationship of .68; for every 100 females there were 68 males. Thus, the male Swedish emigrants, representing the majority of the Swedish population in America, was substantially under-represented in the Covenant according to the Religious Bodies statistics of 1936. Even an equal proportion of both sexes in the denomination would still have resulted in an under-representation of men in terms of the Swedish emigrant population.

A comparison of sex distributions for both the Covenant and the Free denominations discloses that the relative distribution of the latter (43 percent male, 57 percent female) was quite similar to the figures for the Covenant (Religious Bodies 1936), and suggests that the poor representation of Swedish-born males was not necessarily a Covenant trait, but that it may have been particular to the Mission Friends progeny.

4.5.3 Some Demographical Data on Chicago Congregations: 1958

In Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2), mention was made of the particular role played by Chicago in the events surrounding the organization of SEMCo, and a characterization of the early Mission Friends based on data available from the Chicago-based congregations indicated a rather striking predominance of women among their numbers. Data from both Periods I and II support the findings concerning this female dominance within the Covenant, though the relative distribution for both periods is somewhat more proportionately equal than was observed in the figures from the 1870's. The data presented in Table 4.10 was collected in a 1958 survey of 17 Chicago Covenant congregations³. The raw material gathered in the survey, part of which was re-tallied for the purpose of the study here, include individual level information such as name (from which sex was determined), age, occupation, and a measure of involvement in the church.

Table 4.10 Age and Sex Distribution in
Chicago Congregations: 1958

Age	Males		Females		Total
	N	(%)	N	(%)	(%)
10-19	81	(9)	98	(7)	(8)
20-25	171	(18)	191	(14)	(15)
30-39	148	(15)	191	(14)	(14)
40-49	158	(17)	253	(17)	(17)
50-59	155	(16)	248	(17)	(16)
60-69	130	(13)	224	(16)	(14)
70-79	69	(8)	153	(11)	(9)
80-89	34	(3)	84	(5)	(5)
90-	5	(1)	4	(1)	(1)
	951	(100)	1,446	(102)	(99)

The breakdown of the sex distribution by age shows the male-to-female relationship of the Chicago constituency (40 percent to 60 percent) to be representative of the Covenant in general, as seen in Section 4.5.2 above. A closer examination, however, reveals a point above which the male-female distribution is rather equal, and below which there exists a distinct female predominance. Between the ages of 10 to 39, the relative male-female relationship is 46/54. Thereafter, for those born prior to approximately 1917, the female dominance is much more striking (64 percent against 36 percent), and is even greater than was indicated by the figures from 1870, a fact which, it should be pointed out, may be due to any number of intervening events. The findings of the 1958 survey do support previous findings of a female domination among the Covenant constituency, even to the point of being characteristic for the Chicago Mission Friends prior to the organization of the Covenant.

The sudden change in the male-female relationship at about age 40 might be accredited to the efforts and measures implemented prior to World War I in response to a growing concern within the Covenant for holding on

to its youth. The figures of Table 4.10 show that, to the extent the Covenant (at least in Chicago) was able to attract youth and younger members in the decades following the pre-World War I emphasis on youth and childrens' activities, both men and women were involved, the men to a much greater extent than previously.

4.6 Sunday-School and Youth Activities

In 1932, a Church School Commission was started for the purpose of coordinating the activities of the Sunday-school and youth organizations of the denomination. The commission helped develop materials and publications, organized youth summer camps, planned for youth conventions for the denomination's youth and compiled statistics (see Olsson 1962 p. 590 ff).

As will be seen in Table 4.11 below, the number of Sunday-school groups including "Sunday-school chapels" (ibid) out-numbered the number of Covenant congregations, both on the regional and national levels, for most of the period. The youth societies, on the other hand, numbered somewhat fewer than the congregations. The figures are taken from the Covenant Yearbooks and include all member and associate-member congregations alike inasmuch as the two categories are inseparable in the summaries appearing in the yearbooks.

Both the Core and Western regions show about 20 more Sunday-school groups than congregations (making allowance for Canada in 1930), while the Eastern region shows somewhat fewer Sunday schools than congregations for the years represented. Although the records give no indication of the denominational ties of the non-Covenant groups, it is probable that they comprise Sunday-school organizations of independent congregations as well as groups organized by the Covenant but not connected to a formal congregation as such.

After 1940, the number of groups remains fairly stable and seems to gradually converge with the number of congregations as the latter increases which might indicate that the Sunday-school groups, to the extent that they were tied to organized congregations, eventually joined the Covenant along with the congregations themselves. For comparative purposes it might be pointed out that Sunday-school membership figures exceeded congregational membership for the denomination at large for the years included in the table above by 2,600 in 1930 and more than 15,000 in 1959.

Table 4.11 Covenant Sunday School and Youth Societies for
Period II

Year and Region	Total Congs.	S.-S. Groups	Youth Members	Youth Groups	Members
1930	406	394*	44,651*	336**	13,602**
Core	244	262		202	
Western	62	44*		53	
Eastern	100	88		81	
1940	450	498	51,061	370	12,994
Core	277	297		227	
Western	74	104		51	
Eastern	99	97		92	
1950	480	525	53,540	358	9,504
Core	302	332		234	
Western	80	100		51	
Eastern	98	93		73	
1959***	529	529	73,225	197	3,870
Core	316	321		123	
Western	107	105		40	
Eastern	106	103		34	

* Canada not included

** Figures from 1932

*** The records for 1959 were published in the Yearbook in a form more comparable with the earlier years than were the 1960 records.

The number of youth societies are consistently fewer than the congregations and decrease until the end of the period at which time they are found in only about one-third of the congregations. The relatively low representation of societies in the congregations applies to all three regions. Both the number of societies and the society membership figures show an overall decrease of about two-thirds for the period, despite a slight gain for 1940. It is uncertain whether this decrease is due to a decline in partici-

pation, (a departure from the early 1930's when close to 50 percent of the members were not members of the Covenant; see Sandstrom 1967; YB32:190), due to a restructuring of denominational youth activities or due to a change in recording membership (see the 1960 statistical records).

4.7 Covenant Institutions

4.7.1 General

The Period I roster of institutions operated and/or supported in part by the Covenant remains much the same for Period II (see Chapter 3.8). A few additions and exclusions are noted for Period II, but the greatest changes are in terms of growth and expansion of the established institutions (Olsson 1963 p. 600 ff). The table below offers a comparison of the two lists as of the end of each period.

Table 4.12 Covenant Owned and/or
Supported Institutions.

Category	Period I	Period II
College/Seminary	1	1
Bible Institutes	1	3
High Schools	2	3
Hospitals ¹	3	3
Sanitarium	1	1
Homes for Aged	6	8
Retirement Homes	0	1
Childrens' Homes	3	3
Sailors' Homes ²	2	2
Immigrant Homes	2	0

1 Each of the hospitals maintained a School of Nursing.

2 The Sailors' Home in California closed at the end of 1960.

The increases come in the form of two Bible institutes, four homes for the elderly and one retirement facility and one High School. The Bible institutes were started in Canada in 1941 and Alaska (then a part of the mission field) in 1948, and the High School in Canada in 1957. Two homes for the aged were also established during the period: Elim Home in Los Angeles, California, in 1940, and Midwest Covenant Home in Stromsburg, Nebraska, in 1947. A retirement facility, Covenant Palms, was built in Miami, Florida, in 1952. It expanded rapidly to become, by the end of Period II, the largest institute of its kind under the auspices of the Covenant Church. Childrens' homes were started in Alaska in 1948, and a boys' home, Victoria Farm, near Ortonville, Minnesota, established in 1950. The Childrens' Home at Phelps Center, Nebraska, was not in operation under Covenant care during the period. Both the immigrant programs, the one on the West coast, the other in New York, were discontinued during the period, the latter by decision of the Covenant in 1932.

Though information relative to the topic has not been found, the role of the Covenant institutions during Period II underwent some changes stemming from and related to the events occurring at the end of Period I concerning the matter of language. The role of the educational institutions in preserving the Swedish language of the denomination was no doubt largely abandoned by the onset of Period II. In searching for a surrogate for the former language preservation function of the schools, it would appear natural that the benevolent institutions, including the retirement centers and convalescent homes, assumed this function to a certain degree insofar as these centers represented small gatherings of elderly Covenant constituency. These centers would appear to be a natural environment for the continuation of the Swedish language and culture.

4.7.2 Education Institutions

The three major educational institutions of the Covenant, North Park College and Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois, and Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis, Minnesota, all experienced substantial growth during the period as indicated by the enrollment figures presented in Table 4.13.

The two Chicago-based institutions show growth figures which increased gradually and peaked out in the mid- to late forties, before leveling off somewhat. The Academy enrollment on the other hand, following a rather stable 13-year period, rose to an all-time high of over 600 pupils in the beginning of the 1960s.

Table 4.13 Enrollment at Three Covenant
Educational Institutions

Year	North Park College	North Park Seminary	Minnehaha Academy
1931	418	41	228
1932	448	44	222
1933	580	40	187
1934	843	43	134
1935	1099	48	157
1936	1127	56	209
1937	1568	56	227
1938	1672	63	229
1939	1892	67	227
1940	1949	68	212
1941	1967	73	248
1942	1929	86	220
1943	1937	100	221
1944	2063	86	307
1945	2545	97	374
1946	2615	78	469
1947	3168	90	476
1948	2918	51	474
1949	2575	136	472
1950	2360		498
1951	2269	112	516
1952		140	483
1953	1832	122	509
1954	1854	87	500
1955	1940	110	465
1956	1918	87	459
1957	2126	75	489
1958	2139	79	574
1959			570
1960			600+

The increases noted might be accounted for by any of several factors including, on a more local level, a greater demand for college education, larger constituency from which to recruit students, a need for trained pastors, etc, as well as external factors such as the war which sent many

scurrying to schools and colleges and, indirectly, created the prosperity necessary for a college education. Favoring increased enrollment at the seminary was the acute shortage of Covenant ministers following the switch to English within the denomination, the effects of which were still felt yet in the 1940's (see YB44:63; 45:12).

As the Covenant became less an immigrant denomination and more an American Protestant denomination (see Section 4.8), it would be expected that the constituency from which students were recruited would broaden proportionally, both in the sense of non-Swedes entering the Covenant and in the sense that the Swedish identity of the denomination was less pervasive as the Covenant became more accepted generally, it, thus was more apt to attract outsiders to the institutions. A measure of the feasibility of this assumption is an examination of the extent to which other denominations were represented in the student bodies. Table 4.14 lists several of the different denominations represented and the breakdown at each of the three schools.

Although these figures are not necessarily representative for more than the years immediately proceeding and following the source material, it is observed that except for the Seminary, the institutions relinquished a part of their former ethnic base and that the proportion of Covenant constituents to outsiders varies greatly. The Academy would appear to have the least Covenant members of the three, the Seminary being completely Covenant and the College with a majority of Covenant. Thus, while the recruitment base for both the College and Academy appears to have broadened, the Seminary for the year concerned remains solidly a denominational institution.

According to Olsson (1962) most of the college student body in the 1930's commuted locally and was non-Covenant. With the building of residence halls after the war, the proportion of Covenant students increased and became greater than non-Covenant. At the end of the 1950's, it was reported that the proportion of residence to commuting students and the proportion of Covenant to non-Covenant was about the same at 55 percent/45 percent (ibid p. 613).

Additional information relevant to the Academy reveals that for the student body of 1956, fully 96 percent came from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area in which the school was located (YB56:168). Furthermore, for the year 1959, no fewer than 25 different denominations were represented among the students (YB59:156). In terms of these figures, the growth in enrollment at the Academy was likely a result of the school losing its particularistic character and as such the Academy, as did the College, served to an extent to fulfill the role of a local religious school rather than that of a regional denominational Covenant institution.

Table 4.14 Denominational Representation at the
Covenant Schools in Percent

Denomination	North Park		Minnehaha
	College	Seminary	Academy
Covenant	62.5	100	28.0
Lutheran	10.6		33.5
Baptist	4.8		13.3
Methodist	3.0		5.0
Presbyterian	2.6		5.5
Free			5.0
Congregational	1.4		
Pentecostal			2.5
Other	3.2		7.0
Unspecified	<u>1.9</u>		
Total	100	100	100

Sources: For North Park; YB55:86, for Minnehaha;
YB57:157.

4.8 Cooperative Efforts

Denominational-level relations with other religious bodies during Period II occurred in the interests of cooperation, not consolidation as was the case for a time during Period I. These efforts were largely channeled through one particular committee; however, as will be noted in the following -but which is difficult to exemplify from the sources- cooperative efforts apparently took place on the congregational level to a much broader extent than on the denominational level. Instances of the latter will be described in the following account.

The Committee on Cooperation, started in 1925 and involving several Swedish-America denominations (Baptists, Covenant, Free, Methodists), continued into Period II under the name Swedish-American Inter-Church Council. During the early years of the period, the primary activities of the Council were directed towards people even outside the confines of the denominations and consisted of giving economic and material assistance, in

conjunction with several Swedish National Societies and Swedish relief organizations, to "our poor and suffering countrymen in Chicago" in the shadow of the Economic Depression (YB34:110 ff). The four denominations represented in the Council further cooperated, sometimes in conjunction with yet other religious bodies in such areas as youth and child evangelistic campaigns, Swedish radio broadcasting, religious week-day schools, youth and Sunday-school materials, centennial celebrations of the arrival of Swedish settlers to the Midwest, and in financial support for the construction of a school in Finland (YB49:147), to name a few projects.

The evangelism campaigns, in which the Swedish-American Salvation Army participated, were pursued in hopes of involving more people, especially youth and children, in the churches, and were conducted in the areas in which the denominations were represented (YB33:113; 35:167 ff). The radio broadcasts, a project also supported by the Augustana Lutheran Church and which operated in the Chicago area, were started late in 1933 and were still going on in 1958 (YB34:110; 36:147; YB39:160; CA I-16). Furthermore, the organization of religious week-day schools was one of the first undertakings of the Council, extending back into the late 1920's. According to a 1939 report, there were 16 schools operating in Chicago, some of which had been going for 10 years, involving some 720 children. According to the same report, the schools were also supported by evangelical bodies not of Swedish background (YB39:160).

Later in the period, the Council participated in arranging for the Swedish Pioneer Centennial activities of 1948, one of the objects of which was to contribute to the collection, preservation and publication of materials relating to the heritage and accomplishments of the Swedish settlers. Among the diverse speakers were President of the United States Harry Truman, Arch-Bishop of Sweden Erling Eidem, Prince Bertil of Sweden and President of the Covenant Theodore W. Anderson.

Other activities of the Council and of the Covenant in particular included war relief funds and material distributed through various channels including the American Friends Service Committee, the National Association of Evangelicals, Church World Service and the Mission Covenant of Sweden (1953:14).

In 1948, the Covenant became a member denomination of the Federation of Free Evangelical Churches (YB48:14), which comprised various European and Scandinavian bodies. This international union was perhaps the first manifestation on the part of the Covenant of formal ecumenical alignment on the denominational level. However, there was an awareness of the limited scope of Covenant participation with other American groups not of Swedish or Scandinavian background. In 1945, Covenant President T. W. Anderson had urged for closer cooperation with other Christian groups, calling for the

Covenant to "take our place in the stream of religious life in America" (YB45:14), with the declaration that the former national and linguistic barriers were now broken, and that the constituency of the denomination included thousands of non-Scandinavians. Nevertheless, cooperation with other denominations for the remainder of the period continued to center around other American-Swedish denominations both on the home front, via the Inter-Church Council, and in foreign missions (YB49:8,166; 50:5; 51:9; 52:9; 56:192).

In 1952, a Comity Commission was organized to study the question of Covenant relations with other denominations (YB52:204). Having considered the issue of ecumenicity particularly in regard to three inter-denominational bodies (National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, National Association of Evangelicals, American Council of Christian Churches) (see also Section 5.6.1), the commission made four recommendations to the delegates of the 1956 convention: that formal affiliation should not take place with any body; that present cooperation on the local, congregational level be continued; that present cooperation with inter-denominational bodies continue; that the investigation be continued (YB56:189 ff). Included in the report was an accounting of "The Ecumenical Status of the Covenant" showing the involvement of various branches of denominational work in a wide variety of "mainline" Protestant associations. This portion of the report (see YB56:192 ff) is a virtual outline of the environment of the Covenant towards the end of Period II. And, as seen in this description, cooperation with specific non-Scandinavian denominations included, and was limited to, the Lutherans (in China), the Presbyterians (in Formosa), and the Disciples of Christ (in the Belgian Congo) (ibid).

Towards the end of Period II, the sense of the Covenant's belonging "...in the stream of religious life in America" (see above) and in particular within the enclaves of Protestantism was reaffirmed through the numerous associations of the Covenant to Protestant inter-denominational organizations (see YB56:192 ff), was echoed in the mounting apprehension directed towards the Catholic Church (46:166; 51:10,27; 52:21,27; 53:9; 60:248 f⁴), and was outwardly declared from within the organization:

The unchurched population of more than 70,000,000 people in America confronts the Protestant church with tremendous responsibility.

Our Covenant was born in a spirit of revival. May the same spirit of concern for the lost prompt us to advance in our significant missionary task in the homeland (YB58:25).

On two different occasions during Period II, campaigns were initiated and goals established by the Commission on Evangelism which would have vastly expanded the limits of the denomination had they been fulfilled. The first such drive was voiced quite early in the period and optimistically called for the winning of 100,000 souls (YB34:62). The second came out of a renewed desire to expand the Covenant's ethnic boundaries and was initiated in anticipation of the 75th anniversary of the denomination in 1960. It called for the attainment of a membership of 65,000, a total number of 575 congregations (in essence, the addition of 100 congregations), an enrollment of 100,000 in the Sunday schools and the raising of 1.75 million dollars in funds by 1960 (YB54:17,166). Except for the latter objective, which was realized in less than a months time, the membership and congregation increases fell far short of the states goals (many congregations were added but many older, smaller ones also folded during this time; see Table 4.2). However, as will be observed in the following section, it wasn't until during the latter part of Period II that "Americans" became involved in Covenant congregations in large numbers.

4.9 The Swedish Connection

4.9.1 Relations with the Covenant of Sweden

In comparison to Period I, relations with the Covenant of Sweden did not subside between 1930 and 1960, although they assumed a different character. As far as can be gathered from the information, the annual conventions of the American Covenant were attended by one or several representatives of the Covenant in Sweden every year except for during World War II and in 1932 and 1933. Furthermore, representatives from America often visited Sweden and the SMF conventions there. In addition to the many official Swedish representatives who travelled around to Covenant churches, the Covenant was also visited by the Swedish-Finnish evangelist Frank Mangs in 1933 and again in 1940 when some \$22,600 in funds were collected for war relief in Norway and Finland (YB33:56; 40:10,162; 41:167), and the Swedish Evangelist John H  dlund, requested by the American Covenant to travel for one year among the Covenant congregations (YB48:18).

Characteristic of the Period II Covenant-SMF relations is that they assume an atmosphere of representation and cooperation -to the extent that

this involved a third party (channeling war-relief materials mentioned earlier and foreign mission work)- and not direct participation of the Swedish Covenant in the work of the American Covenant to the degree that is observed during Period I: a matter no doubt in part attributable to the transition taking place in language, the topic of the following section.

4.9.2 Discontinued Use of the Swedish Language

The issue of language was confronted and, for all formal and practical purposes, resolved by nearly all the congregations of the Covenant emerging out of Period I. The exceptions comprised those few congregations which organized towards the end of the 1920's and which used English from the very beginning. One of the earliest such congregation was organized in 1926 in Rockford, Illinois (CA H-12).

Various details of the language transition are available from three sources, including the report of a survey conducted for the Commission on Evangelism in 1935 (CA H-13), and two surveys conducted in 1968⁵, the one including 17 congregations in Illinois (CA H-9), the other including 13 congregations from four East Coast states (CA H-11). The 1968 surveys included several questions (Table 4.15) relative to the transition from Swedish to English in the worship services and Sunday schools. The responses are, for the most part, given in years, and since the number of congregations included in the studies is relatively small, any attempt to arrive at average values is quite unreliable and unuseful. Instead, the ranges of answers from the congregations for the various questions were gathered from the survey questionnaire sheets for use in this study and are presented in the table on the previous page.

Overall, the transition began in both areas at about the same time, in particular regarding the worship services, but the greater time-spread in the East indicates greater variation between the congregations involved in the study than is seen of the Illinois congregations. Additional information available from items not included in Table 4.15 indicates that the transition in Illinois was more gradual than in the East, and furthermore, more so in Illinois than is indicated in the material from the East, the language of services often alternated from one Sunday to another, and from morning to evening services and there was also the occurrence of double worship services, one in each language on the same day (see CA H-9 and 11).

Table 4.15 Use of Swedish in Illinois and the East Coast

Question (re-worded)	Response	
	Illinois	East Coast
1. When was the word "Swedish" dropped officially from the congregation's name?	1925-1956	1924-1968
2. When did English services begin?	1919-1935	1920-1948
3. Holding of regular services in English?	1930-1944	1930-1953
4. When was English adopted as official language?	1930-1945	1933-1953
5. When were Sunday-school classes conducted all in English?	1908-1940	1918-1935
6. Were there summer schools conducted in Swedish?	Yes: 12 No: 4	4 5
7. When were these discontinued?	1908-1940	1917-1920
8. First non-Swedish speaking pastor?*		1947-1964
9. Presence of large numbers of people not of Swedish backgrounds?*		1948-1957

*Asked only of the Eastern congregations

The lesser frequency of alternating services and the more rapid switch which can be observed among the Eastern congregations is likely related to the fact that the regular use of English came somewhat later here and, as a result, was met with less opposition than was the case in Illinois, an observation supported by the results of the two surveys.

In both areas, and as was indicated for Period I, the use of English in the Sunday schools was much earlier than in the worship services. This is also supported by the 1935 survey, which shows, in addition to the occurrence of services in both languages, the predominance of Swedish in the morning worship services and an even greater use (percentage wise) of English in the Sunday schools, youth meetings and Sunday-evening services.

The two questions pertaining only to the Eastern congregations shed further light on the appearance of non-Swedish, non-Scandinavian people in the congregations. To the extent that this is related to the disappearance of the Swedish language, it can be presumed that people of non-Swedish and non-Scandinavian background made an earlier entry into the congregations of the Midwest, where the transition to the use of English on a regular basis occurred much earlier than in the East.

4.9.3 Cultural Maintenance

Very closely related to the issue of language and the disappearance of Swedish -both in the sense of its disuse, and in the sense that its users were also disappearing- is the concern for preserving the cultural and religious heritage of the Covenant and its constituency.

Swedish was disappearing from the congregations (see the previous section) and from the denomination, as evidenced in the name change effectuated formally in 1937 (YB37:159; see also Chapter 1). On the denominational level, various measures were taken to record, to preserve and to promote the history and culture of the denomination. Among these are included the publication of the third official hymnal of the church, The Covenant Hymnal, in 1931 (Erickson 1976), a compilation of 476 hymns of American, English and Swedish origins, and a fourth official hymnal in 1950. This songbook, The Hymnal, included 600 hymns, 82 translated from Swedish and 5 from Danish and Norwegian (ibid). The 1950 hymnal included many translations made by the Covenant Music Commission established in 1942 (YB42:77).

Other measures included the writing of the history of the Covenant, Covenant Memories, published in 1935; the establishment of a Historical Commission (YB36:97); the translation of I. Skoog's anthems (YB37:9); a translated summary of P. P. Waldenströms writings on the "atonement" (YB37:87) and a translation of his Biblical Doctrines (YB51:12).

On the constituency level might be listed the occurrence of Swedish radio broadcasts, in addition to those mentioned earlier, in Nebraska (YB32:66; 33:73), Kansas (YB40:126; 45:116) and in Canada (YB39:6). Also, Mid-summer Festivals reminiscent of the Swedish "Midsommarfest" were held annually on the campus of North Park College from 1952 until 1965 (CA I-28). These festivals featured an appropriate blend of Swedish (Du gamla, du fria) and American (Star-spangled Banner) patriotic songs, the brass band of the local gathering of the Swedish Salvation Army, well-known speakers and soloists from the Covenants in America and Sweden, and other Swedish dignitaries (ibid).

The various examples of cultural maintenance and preservation occurred on both the denominational and the local levels and are a clear indication of the presence and continued influence of first-generation immigrants and of the on-going continuity of the Swedish heritage of the Covenant towards the end of Period II.

4.10 Summary: Period II

Various aspects of the Covenant as an organization have been examined in this chapter, which covers the period from 1930 to 1960. In this section these aspects will be viewed in terms of Covenant identity and environment based on the discussion of the concepts in Chapter 2, and following the pattern as set forth in the summary of Period I.

Considering first the mechanical aspects of identity, which focus on the congregational and membership statistical information to a large degree, it was seen in the presentation that the overall increase for the period in the number of congregations and in membership figures was relatively the same: approximately 83 percent. The early years of the period were marked by low frequencies for new and joining congregations combined with a high frequency of congregations disbanding or leaving the Covenant for whatever reason. Both the number of congregations started and the number joining the denomination increase after 1945 and to the end of the period. Former associate-member congregations account for a considerable number of those joining especially in the Eastern region but also in the Core region states. Both the number of Sunday-school organizations and the Sunday-school membership increased gradually throughout the period at the same time that youth societies decreased both in numbers and in members.

By region, the greater increases in congregations occurred in the Core region followed by the Western and then the Eastern regions. Ten states were added to the roster of Covenant representation, three in the Western region and seven in the Eastern region. In all three regions the states with the greater increases consist of states with higher concentrations of Swedish mission/Covenant congregations and with high concentrations of Swedish immigrant/off-spring populations.

Several measurements of congregational distribution indicate a rather stable size-structure for the Covenant as a whole with the exception of the congregations having fewest members. The fluctuations here were attributed to a relatively constant turn-over, with many small congregations leaving or disbanding and many small congregations joining. The average size of the congregations showed no overall change during the period. Furthermore, the congregations were more evenly distributed into urban and rural categories than was the denominational membership, which was predominantly urban even though broad regional and state-wise fluctuations occurred. The age distribution of the Covenant greatly favored the older age groups in comparison to the general U.S. population distribution, a situation reflecting the emigrant character of the denomination with an over-representation of the

emigrant age groups among the Covenant constituency. The sex distribution, when related to that of the Swedish emigrants in general, was seen to be an inverse reflection of the Swedish emigrant population; the predominance of women in the denomination is reflected in the Covenant female to male ratio which was identical to the male to female ratio of the Swedish emigrants. The female predominance in Chicago-based congregations was even more marked among the older constituency, but considerably less among the lower age groups.

Among the deliberate aspects of Covenant identity for Period II, items initiated or maintained by the denomination and in the local congregations, are included programs aimed at supporting the Sunday-school and youth activities as well as evangelization on the congregational level and financial support on the denominational level. The earliest of these measures came in 1932 with the Church School Commission, organized to coordinate child and youth activities and appears to have been quite successful. The Commission on Evangelism experienced less success in achieving the goal of 100,000 new souls stated early in the period. A second drive coming later in the period met with mixed success; \$1,75 million was raised in short order but hopes of large Sunday-school, congregation and membership increases fell short.

Most of the organizations started and supported during Period I were maintained in Period II as well, with a few additions. It was observed that the growing student bodies at the Covenant educational institutions, with the exception of the Seminary, was losing their "Covenant" particularity on the whole.

Cooperative efforts with other, primarily Swedish-American, denominations continued for most of the period and, according to reports recorded in the Covenant Yearbooks, consisted of organizing religious day schools, child and youth evangelistic activities, relief assistance channeled through various Swedish organizations, Swedish radio broadcasts and centennial celebrations of the arrival of Swedish settlers in the mid-West. A Comity Commission initiated to study the ecumenical status of the Covenant recommended in its report in 1956 that cooperation with other religious bodies continue on the congregational level and that the Covenant remain unaffiliated on the denominational level. A combination of items including a review of organizations with which the Covenant cooperated and maintained relations, an attitude of suspicion and apprehension directed towards certain denominations and statements from within the denomination leadership seem to locate the identification of the Covenant within the Protestant mainstream in America.

Relations between the Covenants of America and Sweden were characterized as being more formal in comparison to the earlier direct

involvement of the latter in the former's activity. During this period the Covenant made the switch-over to English, a rather slow and deliberate process which in practice was not completed in some areas until the late 1940's and early 1950's. Efforts were made on the denominational level to preserve some of the religious and cultural heritage of the Covenant through the translation and publication of certain documents and many Swedish hymns.

The particular Swedish environment of the Covenant during Period II no longer had the influence it had had in Period I except for areas in Canada. It was suggested that the re-migration to Sweden might have affected the Covenant more than the arrival of additional Swedish emigrants due in part to the larger numbers of the former and also to the probability that these later immigrants, influenced by secularization tendencies in Sweden, were less prone to participate in religious activities.

Important aspects of Covenant environment include its membership in the Federation of Free Evangelical Churches on the international front and, on the national scene, a tendency to relate primarily with other Swedish denominations, in addition to an apparent difficulty in affiliating with other religious bodies and ecumenical organizations on a broader denominational level as was being done on the congregational level and by the Covenant institutions. Toward the end of the period the situation of the Covenant within the Protestant context in America is recognized and officially acknowledged for perhaps the first time.

The inter-relationships of the aspects of Covenant identity and environment as described in Chapter 4 and as summarized herein will be analyzed in Chapter 6 along with the results of Chapters 3 and 5.

5.0 Period III: 1960-1984

5.1 Introduction

By the onset of Period III, the status of the Evangelical Covenant Church as an emigrant denomination was definitely past. The influence of the few remaining Swedish immigrants was rapidly giving place to second, third and fourth generation covenanters who, having adapted to their own social culture, were developing their own religious culture in its own particular context.

For more than half a century - until around the mid-forties - the national particularity of the denomination was reinforced and maintained first through the steady influx of Swedish emigrants and later through the joining of many congregations of Swedish emigrant constituencies. Now, 75 years after its inception, and to the degree that it remained intact, this ethnic quality was rapidly becoming a residual matter, that is, a factor more determined through the survival of the past than by its refreshment or renewal through new members.

The threat posed to the maintenance of the emigrant-ethnic particularity on the individual level through the aging and disappearance of older members was reflected as well on the congregational level, particularly through the disappearance of small local congregations in areas formerly staunchly Swedish.

Two significant phenomena occurred simultaneously during this period on the congregational level. On the one hand, considerable turn-over in smaller congregations took place; indeed, this appears to be limited to the local, rural areas of Covenant concentrations. For the first twenty years of this period, the newly organized congregations entering the denomination nearly equalled in number those withdrawing or dissolving. This is also true of the memberships of these congregations; the turn-over did not result in any substantial gains or losses. Yet, on the other hand, while geographical expansion resulted in little or no membership increase, considerable growth in terms of overall membership for the denomination as a whole was experienced. While the effect of this increase is easily and

perhaps readily measured in quantitative figures, the unavoidable outcome of this development and its long-term repercussions on the ethnic quality of the denomination is much less conspicuous.

Besides accounting for the denominational/congregational statistics for Period III following the pattern of the two previous chapters, a later section of this chapter will be devoted to a look at the denomination based on the latest congregational figures available and with the help of two short questionnaire surveys taken just prior to the centennial celebrations of the Covenant Church.

5.2 Congregation and Membership Statistics

5.2.1 General Overview

Table 5.1 shows the congregation and membership figures for Period III, that is, for the seventy-fifth through the ninety-ninth years of the Covenant's existence. The table contains an item not included for earlier periods, "congregations withdrawn" for the simple reason that, for Period III, these congregations are considerable in numbers and are listed separately in the reports of the annual conventions along with the reason why each congregation was removed from the roster of member congregations.

The reasons given for the exclusions were basically two: the congregation may have elected to withdrawn its membership from the Covenant and continue as an independent congregation or join another denomination, or the congregation may have decided to disband or dissolve due to lack of members or interest or both. Some congregations were "discovered" to have disbanded and were excluded post mortum.

An interesting total in Table 5.1 is the tally of congregations having been accepted, formally, into the denomination. This accumulated figure, 796 congregations, represents 99 years of Covenant existence to and including the reports from the 1984 Annual Convention. Also, according to the latest figures, this total represents some 219 congregations more that belonged to the denomination as of January 1, 1984. These 219 congregations should approximate the number which, throughout the years, have discontinued their membership for whatever reason.

For the period under study, 182 congregations formally joined the Covenant denomination. For comparative purposes, this averages out to about 7 congregations per year, somewhat lower than for Period II's average of 10

congregations but on par with Period I, also 7 (see Tables 3.2 and 4.2). However, due to the number of congregations discontinuing membership (88), the net increase for the 25 year period is considerably less than the net increase for the previous two periods.

Table 5.1 Congregation and Membership Statistics: 1960 to 1984¹

Year	Total Congs.	Total Members	Avg. Memb.	Cong. Added	Cong. Withdrawn	Accum. Congs.	Sunday School
1960	531	59,339	112	5		619	80,706
1961	529	60,094		9	7	628	78,913
1962	531	61,129		10	2	638	78,593
1963	535	62,418		10	2	648	77,976
1964	541	63,176		12	1	660	77,608
1965	550	64,713	118	6	1	666	78,214
1966	552	65,679		4	5	670	77,160
1967	550	66,037		6	6	676	75,896
1968	546	66,587		0	1	676	73,578
1969	545	67,118		9	10	685	71,940
1970	541	67,730	125	4	3	689	70,474
1971	537	67,626		4	5	693	68,785
1972	536	68,646		5	7	698	67,525
1973	533	68,970		4	1	702	67,549
1974	536	70,158		1	3	703	66,415
1975	532	71,061	134	10	5	713	67,543
1976	537	72,926		5	2	718	68,254
1977	536	74,623		9	6	727	68,342
1978	539	75,213		8	3	735	66,975
1979	544	75,805		12	4	747	64,113
1980	552	77,205	140	12	1	759	66,642
1981	562	78,941		12	8	771	67,736
1982	565	80,759		10	2	781	70,448
1983	573	82,542		6	2	787	71,509
1984	<u>577</u>	<u>84,139</u>	<u>146</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>796</u>	<u>70,748</u>
Net							
Change	+46	+24,800	+34	+182	+88	+177	-9,958

Except for one year (1971), membership figures show a steady increase, totalling for the entire period just under 25,000 persons. The rate of increase is somewhat greater toward the end of the period with half of the overall rise coming in the last 10 years of the 25-year period. The continued increases especially for the years 1960 to 1970 occur in sharp contrast to many religious bodies in America.

While membership figures show an upswing, Sunday-school attendance figures show a continual decline from the all-time high in 1960 until 1980 when an upwards swing begins and levels off by the end of the period. This and other items in the table will be examined more in detail in the following sections.

Unlike corresponding tables for Periods I and II, the associate-member congregations are not indicated separately herein mainly due to the inconsistency of marking these in the records but are included in the category "other". As nearly as could be ascertained, however, 11 of the "other" were formerly associated, the remaining 6 were congregations established at least several years prior to joining the denomination. The remaining 167 congregations joined upon being organized or within a couple of years of being started.

By region, the West contributed most with 83 congregations, all but 3 of which joined as newly organized churches. The majority of the new congregations were situated in the West Coast states of California, Oregon and Washington, which combined account for 56 of the 83, all but one being newly organized. Farther up the coast, 14 Alaskan congregations joined the denomination mainly due to Alaska becoming the forty-ninth state of the Union in 1959. Until this time, the Alaskan congregations were considered part of the arena of outer missions, many having been founded during the early years of the Covenant mission work taken over from the Swedish Covenant. Besides being the region with largest increases in the Covenant overall, the increases in the West are more evenly spread over the 5-year period divisions than for either of the other two regions.

The Core region contributed 66 congregations, 7 of which were formerly associated to the Covenant; this is a rather good indication that there were still some independents left in this region with attachments to the Covenant. All 9 of the Core states are represented with at least one joining congregation, with Illinois and Minnesota accounting for nearly three-fifths of all newcomers from the region.

Table 5.2 Joining Congregations by State and Region:
Newly started (N), Other (O)

Region/ state	Congrs 1960	1960- 1964		1965- 1969		1970- 1974		1975- 1979		1980- 1984		SUB- TOTALS		TOTAL
		N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	
Core														
Minnesota	101	5		1		1		4	1	2	1	13	2	15
Wisconsin	27			1	2					1		2	2	4
Michigan	39	4		5						2	1	6	1	7
Illinois	54	4		5				6	1	7		22	1	23
Indiana	5			2						1		3	0	3
Iowa	24	1				1						2	0	2
Nebraska	21			1								0	1	1
Missouri	1					1		5		1		7	0	7
Kansas	21	1		1				2				4	0	4
SUB TOTAL	293	15		15	3	3		17	2	14	2	59	7	66
Western														
Canada	31	1				1				1		3	0	3
N.Dakota	2	1										1	0	1
S.Dakota	10											0	0	0
Montana	4											0	0	0
Washington	27	1		1		2		2		3		9	0	9
Oregon	4	2		1		1		2				6	0	6
Idaho	1											0	0	0
Wyoming	3											0	0	0
Colorado	6	1				1		1		3		6	0	6
California	41	8		6		5	1	5		16		40	1	41
Arizona	2	1										1	0	1
Texas	2	1										1	0	1
Alaska	0	1				1		4	1	7		12	2	14
N. Mexico	0			1								1	0	1
SUB TOTAL	133	17		9		10	2	14	1	30		80	3	83
Eastern														
Maine	3											0	0	0
New Hamp.	1											0	0	0
Vermont	2											0	0	0
Conn.	19		1	1								0	2	2
Mass.	20		1			1				1		1	2	3
Rhode Is.	6											0	0	0
New York	14	1		1				1				2	1	3
Pennsylv.	17	1		1								2	0	2
New Jersey	3		1									0	1	1
Ohio	6	2						2		1		4	1	5
Wash.DC	0											0	0	0
Virginia	1	1				1						2	0	2
Tennessee	1											0	0	0
Alabama	3											0	0	0
Florida	5	5				1		6				12	0	12
Maryland	0	1						1				2	0	2
Arkansas	0									1		1	0	1
SUB TOTAL	101	11	3	1	2	2	1	10	0	2	1	26	7	33
TOTALS		43	3	20	5	15	3	41	3	46	3	166	17	182
5-YEAR TOTALS		46		25		18		44		49				

From the Eastern region 26 "new" and 7 "other" congregations joined. The expansion in this area is greatest in those states not traditionally Covenant strongholds, that is, in states other than those of the former Eastern Missionary Society. This is especially true after 1974, when, of the 15 "new" congregations from this region, only 2 come from states making up the former EMS. The two Eastern region states contributing most congregations are Ohio and Florida, accounting for more than half of all new-coming congregations from the region.

The three states showing the highest number of joining congregations for each region account for about 40 percent (76 of 182) of all congregations to join for the period. These three states, one from each area, are Illinois, California and Florida. While the first two might for various reasons be considered centers for each region, Florida represents a state of rapid expansion for the denomination largely, if not almost entirely, due to the influx of Covenant members among the state's retirement population.

As indicated in Table 5.2 above, the interval 1965 to 1974 was lowest in terms of congregations added. While the category "other" remains constant for each of the 5-year intervals into which Period III is divided, the category "new" for the 10 years between 1965 and 1974 is even lower than for any of the other 5-year spans. For this same 10-year period, only one of the previously mentioned leading states, California, showed fairly constant figures prior to, during and after these otherwise rather slack years. Illinois had no increase for 1970 to 1974 and Florida had none from 1965 to 1969 and only one from 1970 to 1974.

Quite clearly, the focus of attention in terms of congregations joining during Period III, and especially for the category "new", is the West region. The West Coast and particularly California emerges as a frontier, following a pattern started already during the preceding period and continuing at a relatively even pace despite an easing-off between 1965 and 1974 for the denomination as a whole.

Overall, the advancements made from 1960 to 1984 are focused on states traditionally having high Covenant populations except for in the Eastern region, where increases in the 9 former EMS states (10 congregations) come mainly in the first 10 years, and where Ohio and Florida figure in as arenas of Covenant concentrations. Particular Ohio is interesting with 5 congregations being started in a state without initially having either concentrations of Covenant members or areas at one time heavy in Swedish emigrant populations. Other new states include in the West, New Mexico and in the East, Maryland and Arkansas with four starts among them.

5.2.2 Withdrawals and Dissolutions

From Table 5.1 it is observed that of the 796 congregations which at one time had formally joined the Covenant, 577 remained according to the 1984 figures, resulting in a net loss of some 219 congregations. After 1960, the names of each congregation subtracted from ECC membership are recorded in the annual proceedings, along with the reasons which included voluntary withdrawal, indicating the congregation's decision to become denominationally independent or desire to join another denomination, or a decision on the part of the members to disband as a congregation due to lack of interest, faltering membership or economic hardships. Some congregations were dropped and presumed defunct after having not reported for several years. The two categories used in the records are "withdrawals" and "dissolutions".

Table 5.3 Withdrawals and Dissolutions: 1960 to 1984

Period organized	Number of Congregations		Average Membership		Total Loss in Membership	
	Withd/Diss.		Withd/Diss.		Withd/Diss.	
1	9	46	72	23	648	1,035
2	5	17	47	31	235	527
3	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>396</u>
Totals	14	74	63	27	883	1,958

Source: Covenant Yearbooks 1960 to 1984

Table 5.3 is a breakdown of congregational attrition during the period by number of congregations, average membership and total membership for each category, as well as by period during which the congregations were organized (which is not necessarily the year of joining).

Of the 88 exclusions, 14 were due to withdrawals and 74 due to dissolutions. In addition, 18 mergers took place involving 36 individual congregations but these are not included in Table 5.3 since none of the

involved congregations were initiated or recruited, nor did the resultant merger as such create an increase in total denominational membership. The mergers did, however, influence the congregation figures inasmuch as one congregation was taken from the record for each merger effected.

Somewhat more than half (46) of the total losses comprised congregations started prior to 1930, which upon being removed from the records had an average membership of 23. Of these 46 congregations, 32 had fewer than the average 23 members. In terms of membership, this amounted to a loss of 1035. Nine of the 14 withdrawals were also organized prior to 1930. These had an average of 72 members, about three times the size of the dissolving congregations, but still, as will be noted later, somewhat smaller in size than the average ECC congregation (see Table 5.1).

For congregations started between 1930 and 1960, Period II, the 5 withdrawals had an average membership of 47, somewhat lower than the older congregations from Period I. The dissolutions, 17 in all, were on the average larger by 8 members (31) than their Period I counterparts.

Eleven congregations which organized during Period III dissolved during the same period. These were, on the average, larger than both their Period I and II counterparts and tended to dissolve with a somewhat larger membership than did their Period I and II counterparts. In fact, a comparison of congregations organized during Period III reveals that the average membership of those dissolving (36) was slightly higher than that of the incoming category "new" (35 members).

The frequency of withdrawals was highest in the Eastern region where one-third of the total congregational attrition was due to a decision on the part of the members to discontinue association with ECC. Six of the seven withdrawals involved congregations organized prior to 1930. Only one Core region congregation withdrew its membership, a Wisconsin congregation organized in 1932. In all, 10 of the 14 withdrawals for Period III involved congregations organized prior to 1930.

The dissolution frequency is broken down by period of organization and region in Table 5.4. As might be expected, the Core region with its heavy concentration of rural churches (see Table 4.7) accounts for most dissolutions. For each period, half or more of the congregations dissolved were located in Core region states. Nearly two-thirds of all dissolutions were congregations started prior to 1930, that is, congregations which in all likelihood were organized on the local level by immigrants themselves. Among the states having high frequencies of dissolutions are included several with large rural populations: Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan, Kansas, Nebraska and the Canadian provinces.

Table 5.4 Dissolutions by Period and Region
and Canada: 1960 to 1984

Period Organized	Core	West- ern	Canada	East- ern	Total
I	27	4	4	11	46
II	8	5	4	0	17
III	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>
Total	41	11	8	14	74

The effect on membership figures of congregations dissolving or withdrawing from the Covenant was rather minimal and well outweighed by the effect of membership increases due to new congregations joining. The approximate figures based on averages for both categories are 2,800 losses due to congregational attrition and some 3,800 gains through the joining of 166 "new" congregations and gains of approximately 4,700 for all congregations joining during the period, which accounts for about 20 percent of the net membership increase between 1960 and 1984.

5.3 Membership Statistics

5.3.1 Congregational Membership

Whereas, as was pointed out above, the yearly figures for total congregations do not represent a consistent measure of overall increase or decrease tendencies for the period (see note to Table 5.1), the membership figures - not being sensitive for example to decreases in number of congregations as a result of mergers- do give an indication of growth pattern for Period III. Overall, there was an increase of some 24,800 members for the 25-year span, about a 1000-member average annual increase. It should be remembered that this figure represents net increase, that is, the increase which occurs beyond the increase necessary to compensate for membership withdrawals, deaths and "drops" (see the section at end of this chapter).

From Table 5.5, it is observed that the increase both in absolute and relative figures was larger towards the end of the period.

Table 5.5 A Membership Increases: 1960 to 1984

Year	Total Membership	Absolute Change	Relative Change in 0/00	Net Change/ Congregation Turn-over *
1960	59,339			
1961	60,094	755	12.7	154
1962	61,129	1035	17.2	356
1963	62,418	1289	21.0	356
1964	63,176	758	12.1	472
1965	64,713	1537	24.3	220
1966	65,679	<u>966</u>	14.9	8
1967	66,037	358	5.5	60
1968	66,587	550	8.3	-32
1969	67,118	531	8.0	58
1970	67,730	612	9.1	72
1971	67,626	-104	-1.5	8
1972	68,646	1020	15.1	-14
1973	68,970	324	4.7	136
1974	70,158	188	2.7	-54
1975	71,061	<u>903</u>	12.9	260
1976	72,926	1865	26.2	146
1977	74,623	1697	23.2	486
1978	75,213	590	7.9	240
1979	75,805	592	7.9	376
1980	77,205	1400	18.5	472
1981	78,941	1736	22.5	248
1982	80,759	1818	23.0	356
1983	82,542	1783	22.1	188
1984	<u>84,139</u>	<u>1597</u>	<u>19.3</u>	<u>346</u>
Net change	24,800	24,800		4,918

*This column is based on the averages for congregations joining and withdrawing or dissolving for each year.

A very slight loss in membership is seen around 1970/ 1971 and small gains are observed for 4-5 years both prior to and following this time. This slack period occurs simultaneously with a decrease in the number of congregations (see Total Congs. column in Table 5.1), but the extent to which the fewer increases in members is related to gains or losses of congregations is not immediately apparent.

However, by computing the combined effect of congregations added and congregations withdrawing/dissolving for each year - using averages for all categories - and comparing the results with the net gains and losses in total membership (right-most column in Table 5.5 A), an indication of the extent to which congregation gains and losses influence overall membership gains and losses becomes apparent. Membership gains not accountable to increases in the number of congregations would then be calculated as a result of membership increases in the established congregations on the local level.

While net congregation gains clearly account for a sizeable share of membership increases (19%), congregation losses are not without effect in the overall pattern. Between 1966 and 1975, a period during which yearly congregation losses with one exception were greater than or equal to congregation gains, there is a corresponding drop in the number of members being added for approximately the same time period (this is indicated by the horizontal lines in the respective columns in Table 5.5 A).

From 1966 to 1977, 41 congregations withdrew or dissolved while 37 joined the denomination, in other words, a net loss of 4. Eleven mergers also occurred during this time. For all other years of Period III, there was a larger gain than loss in the number of congregations.

While it is by no means ascertained that the slack period is a direct result of congregation losses, it would appear that the yearly membership figures are quite sensitive to fluctuations in the number of congregations. At the same time, however, in the long run it is precisely membership losses which lead to a higher frequency of congregation dissolutions. This is particularly true of the smaller and rural congregations which, having preserved to a larger degree the ethnic particularities of the early Swedish Mission Covenant, are more vulnerable to membership losses due to old age and death than are larger congregations simply because the former have much more limited circles from which to recruit members (see Section 4.5.1). In time, a snowball effect occurs: as the membership of smaller churches decreases, these tend to dissolve, resulting in greater membership losses. These losses are more than compensated for, as it were, by larger numbers of incoming members. This issue will be further addressed later on in Chapter 5, in the section dealing with the present day Covenant.

The slack period pointed to here should be considered in the light of two forces at work. One is the loss accountable to the emigrant status of - and concerns in particular - many smaller congregations as was alluded to earlier; the other effect might be related to the general trend observed of many American religious bodies in which various factors are suggested as contributing to a sudden falling-off in membership figures around and after 1965 (see Section 2.1). In several ways the developments within the Covenant challenge some of the findings of several studies of church growth and decline, and in the light of such findings (see, again, Section 2.1) it is perhaps a credit to the Covenant to have survived with nothing more profound than a "slack" period.

5.3.2 Sunday-School Statistics

The Sunday-school figures for Period III (Table 5.1, right-most column) show a rather strong decline especially for the first 20 years, during which time attendance dropped by some 16,000 pupils. The decreases seem to level out at about the time denominational membership increases falter, around 1971, before reaching a low of 64,000 in 1979. It would appear from the table that the trend in Sunday-school attendance is unrelated to both congregation totals and membership totals for the same period of time. In accounting for this downward trend several factors might be considered. For the first, in view of the fact that Covenant membership increased during Period III by 25,000, the decrease in Sunday-school attendance figures by 10,000 pupils for the same period of time is in all probability not explainable by lower maternity rates among Covenant members.

For the second, the trend for Covenant Sunday-school attendance follows a more general and long-term trend noted of several major U. S. denominations between 1950 and 1975, during which time Sunday-school enrollment declined more than membership in the same denominations (Doyle and Kelly 1979).

Finally, another explanation might be the strong emphasis on childrens' and youth activities in the latter part of Period II, the carry-over of which is seen in decreasing attendance figures as these children outgrow Sunday-school ages. Furthermore, this being true, it would appear just as logical to assume that some of those leaving Sunday-school later turn up in the membership ledgers of the congregations. Although statistics to prove or disprove such an hypothesis are not available except for very late in Period III, a comparison of membership and Sunday-school figures for 1960 and 1984 suggests a possible relationship. Table 5.5 B shows these figures

for three states and the Eastern Conference which, combined, represent about 60 percent of the denominational membership for both years.

Table 5.5 B A Comparison of Membership and
Sunday-School Figures for 1960
and 1984: Selected Areas

Area	1960		1984	
	Membr.	S.S.	Membr.	S.S.
Illinois	11,094	12,619	13,002	8,494
Minnesota	11,078	15,790	15,409	15,591
California	6,836	11,243	13,699	14,040
East Coast	<u>8,330</u>	<u>6,829</u>	<u>7,860</u>	<u>4,604</u>
Denom.				
Total	59,339	80,706	84,139	70,748

On the state level at least, the earlier Sunday-school attendance figures appear to carry a time-delayed effect on the membership totals such that in those states for which the 1960 Sunday-school figures were higher than corresponding membership figures, there is an increase in 1984 membership figures and v.v. for the Eastern States, where the 1960 Sunday-school figures are lower than those for 1960 membership and there occurs a decrease in the corresponding 1984 figures. A similar, albeit shorter-term, effect was found in the study of U.S. denominations where Sunday-school attendance was suggested a "strong predictor of church membership five years later." (ibid p. 159)

5.4 Congregation Size

5.4.1 General Overview

The congregational size-structure at 5-year intervals (except for the last) is presented in Table 5.6, both in absolute and relative figures. At the onset of Period III there was a rather even spread among those congregations with 50 members and less (37 percent), those with between 51 and 100 members (30 percent) and those with more than 101 members (33 percent).

For 1970 the corresponding percentages for the same categories showed a wider spread at percent rates of 31, 29 and 40 respectively. For 1984, the spread was even greater: 23, 31 and 46 percent.

Table 5.6 Congregational Size Structure: 1960 to 1984

Year	-25		26-50		51-100		101-200		201-500		501-		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%
1960	72	14	115	23	149	30	97	19	63	12	11	2	100
1965	61	11	109	20	162	30	125	23	67	13	12	2	100
1970	70	13	98	18	156	29	125	23	77	14	15	3	100
1975	57	11	92	17	142	26	145	27	86	16	14	3	100
1980	56	10	83	15	156	28	146	26	94	17	18	3	100
1984	41	7	91	16	181	31	141	25	99	17	23	4	100

A check of congregation size for all congregations joining during Period III reveals that only two congregations fall within the category 101-200 and four into the 201-500 category. Thus, except for these six congregations, the increases in size as manifest by the tendency towards larger congregations seen in the table above come from within the congregations themselves and are not due to the addition of congregations.

5.4.2 Congregational Size-Structure in Selected Areas

Congregation sizes were compared for 3 states and the East Coast Conference. These areas were chosen for several reasons including the following: they are about the same size except for Minnesota, they represent a variety of settings; industrial, rural, traditional Covenant, new Covenant frontiers, Congregational Covenant, Core, West and East extremes, and all had at one time large concentrations of Swedish immigrant populations. The figures are presented in Table 5.7.

Compared to the figures and development for the denomination as a whole (Table 5.6), the states represented in Table 5.7 offer some deviation. For the category 51-100 which in the denominational figures was

quite constant, there is somewhat of a fluctuation here, with Illinois in fact showing an increase in the number of congregations in this category. In the smaller size categories, a general decrease in the number of congregations was observed in the overall figures. For the areas represented in the table, only Minnesota follows this trend while there is a slight increase shown here for Illinois and a rather stable picture for California and the East.

Between 1960 and 1980, the number of Minnesota congregations in the smallest category fell to slightly more than half, which can be attributed mainly to their having disbanded and not to movement to a larger size category. The increase in small congregations in Illinois is expected in light of the fact that 12 more congregations were added than were excluded before 1980. Some of the additions could account for the increases in the 51-100 category.

Table 5.7 Congregational Size-Structure in Selected Areas: 1960 to 1980

Size	Illinois			Minnesota			California			East Coast		
	1960	70	80	1960	70	80	1960	70	80	1960	70	80
1-50	3	5	8	46	42	28	7	9	9	9	14	11
51-100	12	15	17	31	26	27	12	16	10	15	13	15
101-200	21	18	15	11	23	26	12	14	20	14	18	12
201-	<u>28</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	54	58	60	101	105	101	41	54	61	51	60	55

Adjusted figures for congregation gains and losses until 1980:

Net Gains/Losses	
Illinois	+12
Minnesota	+2
California	+23
East Coast	-5

For the size categories of 101 members and higher, the overall trend for the denomination was towards larger congregations. In the case of Illinois, while the upper category remains constant, the 101-200 category shows six fewer congregations in 1980 than in 1960, and since no congregations of

this size were excluded there, the logical explanation would be decreases in membership in this size congregation.

While the East Coast remained stable in spite of fluctuations up and down within the same categories, Minnesota and California follow the general pattern of increases in the larger size categories. California is the only state represented here showing both substantial increases in the total number of congregations and increases in the three upper categories without a great deal of change in the lower ones. This would be an indication of either large congregations joining, of fast growth or, most likely, a combination of the two.

In sum, none of the states or the conference represented here fits very closely the pattern of the denomination in general. This is certainly indicative of the variety of characteristics and qualities of the separate areas. Yet, one might suspect that much remains hidden behind the figures as presented in this fashion. For example, the Illinois statistics, while relatively stable, most likely suppress the highly mobile constituency typical of Midwest industrial states. California, with its enormous growth potential, where the congregations are no doubt less attached to or influenced by the Swedish ethnic heritage of the denomination than are the congregations in the other 3 areas, reflects this potential in membership expansion, though this too is a highly mobile society. Minnesota, with its concentrations of rural settlements as shown by the state's over-representation of small congregations, naturally is quite vulnerable to the higher age structure of the constituency within these small congregations, as discussed in Chapter 4 (Section 4.5.1). The East, with rural congregations started in much the same fashion as those in the Midwest, also has to contend with other competition as witnessed by the fact that almost half of the congregation losses until 1980 were due to withdrawals. In fact, the East accounts for half the withdrawals for the entire denomination during Period III. Most of the Eastern congregations did not become full-fledged member congregations until late in the 1940's at about the time many of the congregations were switching completely to English (see Section 4.9.2). That the frequency of congregations withdrawing is greater for this region might be related to a change of sentiments within these congregation over a short period of time due to several factors including the late switch-over to English, the quite early and large influx of non-Covenant people and the changing age structure of these congregations to a younger constituency (see Section 5.6.4)

5.5 Covenant Organizations

The roster of institutions operated by the Covenant either on the denominational or conference level increased during this period. This increase is accountable mainly by the starting of several retirement facilities. By 1970, 14 such facilities for retired and elderly people housed more than a thousand residents (YB70:99). By 1983, this number had reached some 3,000 residents at 17 centers (YB83:168). During the period, facilities were opened in Illinois, Colorado and California. The type and number of institutions in operation at the end of Period III, along with the figures from the previous periods, are presented in Table 5.8.

The majority (19 of 29) of the institutions were located in Illinois, Minnesota and California. And although there is no estimate available of the degree to which these institutions are frequented by other than Covenant people, the potential of these institutions in furthering the cultural heritage of the Covenant forebearers is quite enormous.

Table 5.8 Covenant Institutions to 1983

Category	Period I	Period II	Period III
College/Seminary	1	1	1
Bible Institutes	1	3	1
High Schools	2	3	1
Hospitals	3	3	3
Sanitorium	1	1	
Homes for Aged	6	8	
Retirement Homes	0	1	17
Childrens' Homes	3	3	2
Sailors' Homes	2	2	1
Immigrant Homes	2		

This is illustrated, for instance, by the opportunities of the educational institutions to teach the history of the denomination in the classroom. There are also exchange programs implemented whereby students from the United States and Sweden spend a year studying in the other country for first-hand experience.

Furthermore, the retirement centers under Covenant auspices attempt to carry on many of the festive occasions reminiscent of many of the residents' Swedish heritage. It is perhaps in centers such as these that the cultural heritage of the immigrants survives to the greatest extent, as many of the congregations have long since parted from the older customs. However, as will be shown later in this chapter, some of the older celebrations are still alive and practiced both in the home and the congregation.

5.6 Relations with Other Denominations

5.6.1 The Commission on Interchurch Relations

The Comity Commission established in 1952 to study Covenant relations with other denominations continued after 1962 under the name "Commission on Interchurch Relations (CIR). In 1963, a special committee was formed consisting of CIR and other Covenant administrators to seriously consider the issue of affiliation with other bodies on an inter-denominational level and the possibility of merger with another group on the denominational level. In accordance with a decision of the 1964 Annual Convention, a referendum was held in the Covenant congregations in order to determine the disposition of the constituency with regard to the question of inter-denominational affiliation. Having first been encouraged to study relevant material supplied centrally by the Covenant, the members were then asked to vote their preference on the referendum issue. The results, comprising nearly 40 percent (25,000) of the total membership from 70 percent (400) of the congregations, are presented in Table 5.9.

The organizations included in the referendum were World Council of Churches (WCC), an international fellowship of "churches of Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox confessions gathered for study, witness, service and the advancement of unity" (CA I-24); the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), a theologically conservative coalition of denominations, schools and individuals aimed at programs of cooperative evangelization (ibid); the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCC), comprising churches of Protestant and Eastern Orthodox persuasions the main aim of which is to serve as a resource and service agency for the churches involved (ibid); and American Council of Christian Churches (ACC), "a

separatist and fundamentalist" fellowship of denominations, standing in opposition to the NCC, membership in which requires acquiescence to the doctrinal stipulations of the Council (ibid).

Table 5.9 Interchurch Relations Referendum Voting Results:
Given in Percent of Total Votes Cast, by Area,
Sex and Population Density

	For WCC	Against WCC	Not sure	Total %	For NAE	For NCC	For ACC	None	Not sure	Total %
Core	18	63	19	100	22	11	4	42	22	101
Western	7	84	9	100	36	3	2	46	13	100
Eastern	42	33	25	100	17	23	5	35	20	100
Central*	29	48	23	100	24	18	3	30	25	100
Total	20	63	18	101	24	11	6	41	19	101
Male	22	63	15	100	27	13	4	39	17	100
Female	19	62	19	100	15	12	3	38	22	100
Over- 10,000	25	57	19	101	27	14	4	33	22	100
Under- 10,000	12	71	16	99	14	7	3	47	19	100

Source: CA I-22,24

*Central Conference comprising Illinois, Indiana, and some Michigan and Wisconsin congregations included as separate unit for comparison.

The vote of the constituency as a whole was interpreted by the CIR special committee as opposing affiliation with any of the inter-denominational bodies included in the referendum. While the national bodies were favored over the international WCC, no one body received more than 25 percent of the votes cast to its favor.

A breakdown of the constituency by area reveals broad digressions from the Covenant norm. The Eastern area indicates the highest figures in favor of affiliation both for WCC and the national bodies combined, followed by the Core region, particularly by the Central Conference members. The Core region most nearly represents the Covenant percentages and the Western region is least representative. The Western area is also the most

homogeneous, showing clear preferences for NAE and against WCC, and the least indecision of all areas.

By concentrations of population, the figures would indicate that a vote for affiliation is somewhat positively related to areas of greater population density. In other words, the urban centers tend more to favor affiliation, the more rural areas tend not to favor it. Another possible explanation for the regional differences might be found in the relative higher numbers of formerly associated congregations in the same areas which are more in favor of inter-denominational affiliation (see Section 4.3.2).

By sex, the males, slightly more than the females, favor outside affiliation, as indicated in the higher percentage of male votes relative to the four bodies. The females, besides being more against affiliation, are also a more uncertain vote, perhaps indicative of a more conservative and collective attachment to/identification with the Covenant due to their proportionately greater numbers but also to an effective and wide-spread Women's Organization.

Between 1966 and 1975 several prospective merger candidates were singled out for consideration and discussion. These denominations included the American Lutheran Church, the Church of the Brethren, the Church of God, the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, the Evangelical Free Church, the Free Methodist Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church, the Moravian Church in America, the Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ (YB67:221). The list was narrowed down to two denominations in 1975, but at the same time, the commission described Covenant relations with other bodies in terms of a "holding pattern", with "...no big changes ...likely to happen in the next few years...", and Covenant for future cooperation at this time" (YB75:113).

Results of a 1981 study on interchurch activities on the congregational level indicate a rather wide range of such activities including participation in various types of worship services, prayer services, Bible studies, patriotic services, prayer breakfasts and luncheons, and evangelistic services, in addition to ministries to the elderly and youth and in areas such as counseling, social services and athletic programs.

While the source material gives no indication of the variety of denominations and bodies included in these activities and programs, it is apparent that the participation extended beyond the Protestant community. In terms of these activities, the role of the Covenant is 'self-described' as "...a somewhat unique 'pietistic bridge' between the traditionally evangelical denominations and some of the mainline and Roman Catholic churches" (YB82:188). In addition to these activities, it is furthermore recorded that a study had been started by the Commission on Interchurch Relations of "Jewish-Christian relations" (ibid).

5.6.2 Relations with Other Churches

Apart from the contacts maintained and described in the previous section, the Covenant maintains relations with other bodies as well. Although instances of these are often limited to formal occasions such as the exchange of representatives at Annual Conventions, the extension of honorable delegate membership at the conventions, and the extension and reception of greetings and felicitations, the recurrent inclusion of particular bodies would serve to indicate the existence of a binding link beyond that which arises out of purely amicable relationships.

Several such denominations are repeatedly mentioned in the minutes of the Annual Convention proceedings. The Covenant of Sweden, as has been stated in previous chapters, continues to send representatives to the conventions of the Covenant in America and vice-versa. Though it was agreed upon by the two bodies early in the 1960's to continue to exchange representatives on a biennial basis, there were few ECC conventions held during Period III without the presence of either/or SMF President, Secretary of Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Conference Superintendents, Dean of the Seminary, Editor-in-Chief of the Covenant paper, etc., and as far removed as 100 years from the experience of Royalty, greetings relayed by SMF representatives to the Covenant in America from the King of Sweden still caused standing ovations in 1963 (YB63:215).

Also included alongside SMF in this account is the Evangelical Free Church, comprised basically of former Mission Friend congregations and other Scandinavian congregations, and the Baptist Central Conference, formerly the Swedish Baptist denomination. The records with few exceptions included greetings both to and from these "sister" denominations. Representatives from member denominations of the Federation of Free Evangelical Churches, largely an European body, are also seen among the visitors to the ECC Annual Conventions.

5.7 The Covenant Today

5.7.1 The Material

The various themes to be discussed in this section are somewhat similar to those discussed earlier in this chapter, the difference being that the present discussion will focus primarily on the latest material available in order to present an up-to-date picture -within the chosen bounds- of the Covenant.

Among the materials included here will be the 1981, 1983 and 1984 denominational statistics. The congregational statistics for 1983 and 1984 are in some respects of particular interest since they contain figures for items not previously included in such comprehensive form. Specifically, for these two years, the net gains and losses in membership are broken down for each congregation into the following categories:

Transferred In, of Covenant Background
Transferred In, of Other Background
Converts of Covenant Background
Converts of Other Background
Transferred Out
Deaths
Dropped from Membership Roster

Other sources of material include 2 questionnaire surveys conducted during 1983 in an effort to complement the material available and in an attempt to determine the presence of the Swedish element within the denomination, something of which there is little other gathered information. The results of both studies are hitherto not published. The first was a single page questionnaire sent out early in 1983 (also referred to as the 1983 Congregations Survey) to the pastors of all congregations which according to the 1981 Covenant Yearbook had joined the Covenant sometime between 1930 and 1960, and to the pastors of selected congregations organized prior to 1930. The selection was made in an effort to involve states from the 3 general regions, Core, Western and Eastern, and with the intention of including congregations of a variety of sizes from each area.

Of the 67 letters sent to the Period I congregations, 57 were returned thereof one unopened, for a frequency of 80 percent. Of the 109 letters sent to pastors of congregations started in Period II, 76 were returned of which one unopened, for a total of 69 percent. Of the 124 letters sent to Period III congregations, 8 were returned unopened, and 89 answered, for a frequency of 77 percent. In all, 217 responses were received, an overall frequency of 75 percent.

Numerous ones of those responding to the first questionnaire indicated a willingness to aid in distributing, collecting and returning a second questionnaire, this time aimed at individual members (also referred herein as the 1983 Covenant Members Survey). From among those responding positively were chosen 30 congregations, again according to geographical spread, size (preferably not over 150 members) and period of organization, and heavy concentration of members with Swedish ancestry, to which the second questionnaire was sent in late 1983. In all, 2000 copies were sent

to the congregational offices for distribution at the discretion of the pastors. The intention was to send sufficient questionnaires, 1 sheet on both sides, to cover about 80 percent of each congregation's 1981 membership, and that the distribution should preferably take place in conjunction with an ordinary worship service. This proved to be too ambitious, judging from the returns which ranged from one-third to one-half of the congregation's membership. The return rate was 469 responses from 20 congregations: 153 returns from 5 West congregations, 190 returns from 9 Core congregations and 126 returns from 5 East congregations.

The overall 75 percent return rate of the Congregations survey yields satisfactory representation of the population selected. The relatively limited number of Period I congregations selected is perhaps compensated for by the 80 percent return rate for that period. And while it is difficult to determine the effective return rate of the second questionnaire, particularly since not all responses included an indication of the number present at the occasion of the questionnaires' being handed out, the final response percentage falls somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 percent of attendance figures (members only) of those congregations reporting this information. The different criteria for choice of congregation in the Covenant members survey, the second study (for example, the emphasis on congregations of high percentages of Swedish background among the membership), are also represented in the congregations responding. Furthermore, as will be indicated in the discussion, the sex and age distributions of the respondents correspond to figures for the Covenant as seen in other studies, in particular the Church Profile study (1976). One of the criteria for choice of congregation was a bias toward heavy representations of Swedish ancestry which will have to be taken into consideration in weighing the results.

5.7.2 1984 Congregations by Size

In Table 5.6, the size spread for all congregations was presented at 5-year intervals. While such a means of measurement indicates change in the spread over a period of several years, there is no indication as to whether the change represents continual growth or if there is fluctuation up and down of all or many congregations, both old and new ones. The ideal test would be to look at all congregations individually over time to observe the actual change. In a time series, however, increase can be measured using the same congregations and taking readings at different stages. In Table

5.10, the 1984 congregations are recorded by congregation size at three different points in time, in 1930, in 1960 and again in 1984, depending on the year of organization of the congregation.

The 1930 membership includes those congregations which had both organized and joined the Covenant during Period I. The column for 1960 membership includes both the congregations from the 1930 column and all which joined subsequent, and which were recorded in the 1984 statistics.

The 1930 congregation size spread is much more evenly distributed among the categories than is seen for the other two years. The upward swing for the middle categories is an indication that the large gains made toward the end of Period II remained within the Covenant. Particularly the former Eastern Missionary Society contributed to higher figures for the category 51 to 100 members.

Table 5.10 Congregation Size by Category and Selected
Years: 1984 Congregations*

Size Category	Number of Congregations					
	1930		1960		1984	
	Memb.		Memb.		Memb.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
-25	37	18	42	10	41	7
26-50	38	19	90	21	91	16
51-100	47	23	131	31	181	31
101-200	44	22	92	22	141	25
201-500	33	16	59	14	99	17
501-	6	3	9	2	23	4
Total	205	101	423	100	576	100

*This table includes all congregations listed in the 1984 Covenant statistics. Those established prior to and listed for 1930 and for 1960 are included in the appropriate columns as well.

Percentage-wise, and except for the lowest category, all size ranges and therefore the size structure of the Covenant remain relatively stable for the 1930, 1960 and 1984 figures. What is not apparent from the figures in the table is the possibility of fluctuations occurring on an inter-category basis.

5.7.3 The Organizing and Joining of Congregations

As pointed out early in Chapter 3, many more Swedish Mission congregations existed than the number which joined SEMCo. For a time, different denominations, both American and Swedish, competed for the loyalties of these congregations. Thus, there was often a considerable time lapse between the establishment of a congregation and until its formally joining a given denomination, as was the case for many of the Covenant's congregations. With the passing of years the time lapse became shorter to where during Periods II and III, most congregations joined within a few years of organizing. Table 5.11 is a cross-tabulation of "year joining" and "year organizing" for the 1984 congregations.

Table 5.11 Cross-tabulation of Year Organized by Year Joined:
1984 Congregations

Year Organized	Year Joined							
	-1930		1931-1960		1961-1984		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
-1930	203	(64)	105	(33)	10	(3)	318	(100)
%	(100)		(48)		(7)			
1931-1960			114	(96)	5	(4)	119	(100)
%			(52)		(3)			
1960-1984					135	(100)	135	(100)
%					(90)			
Total/%	203/ (100)		219/ (100)		150/ (100)		572	

Source: 1983 Congregations Survey

The indicator of time lapse is the percent figure to the right of the numerical value for each time period. Not all the congregations included in the 1984 Covenant records which organized during Period I joined within the same period; 36 percent joined later (33 percent in Period II and 3 percent in Period III). On the other hand, however, nearly all (96 percent) which were established during Period II joined the Covenant during that period along with almost as many which were started during Period I. Of the congregations joining during Period III, very few (10 percent) were started prior to Period III.

This table confirms long-term what was seen for the individual periods, namely, that the congregations joining the Covenant during the latter part of its existence were to a greater degree "new" congregations and not older, established congregations. This may be interpreted as indicating that the Covenant seems to have lost its appeal to older, established congregations or that the alignment or realignment of the older Mission congregations was complete and that relatively few other established, non-mission congregations deemed it advantageous to join ECC. This may also be indicative of changes in recruitment patterns - from the early years when travelling representatives were sent criss-crossing the country to start mission stations in areas of Swedish settlements which might or might not have joined the denomination immediately - to were, already during Period II but particularly in Period III efforts were focussed on Covenant extension programs in which many new congregations were organized under the auspices of the district conferences and the direct leadership of the denomination.

5.7.4 Membership Changes

5.7.4.1 1983-84 Denominational Data

Perhaps the most interesting and, for present purposes, instrumental item of data relative to both the 1983 and 1984 statistics is the inclusion of a breakdown of membership gains and losses. Since these items are specified only for these two years, the averages of the values for both years are used in order to minimize the chance of accidental highs influencing the results. These average values comprise the base of the following calculations.

These seven items presented at the beginning of this section are broken down in Table 5.12 A by period of organization for the congregations, and by areas, including the three states Illinois, Minnesota and California, and the East Coast conference. The number of congregations for

each area and period is given to the extreme right. The figures are given in permill (0/00) of the total 1984 state/conference Covenant membership.

The central issue being addressed in Table 5.12 A is the gains and loss figures as specified by the categories "Covenant" and "Other"; in other words, what is the source of the influx of members: are they of Covenant background or not. It is the relation between these two figures which is of interest in the table and while it is possible and tempting to make further comparative observations, allowances should be made for the varying number of congregations for the three periods and for variations for each state when comparing the different periods for a single state.

The results for the items Transfers In and Converts are given as an expression of the non-Covenant to Covenant ratio for the congregations according to period of organization in Table 5.12 B. Thus, a higher figure indicates a greater proportion of the category non-Covenant than that of Covenant among the Transfers In or Converts, a lower figure indicates a lesser proportion. The other items are presented in terms of permill of the entire Covenant constituency within the state or area for each period.

As for Transfers In, with a single exception, the share of Transferred in Other is consistently greater than the share of Transferred in Covenant, which implies that for all those transferring their membership to the Covenant in a particular state or conference, the majority were not of Covenant religious background. The ratios vary somewhat for the different areas represented and according to period of organization for the congregations as seen in Table 5.12 B.

The figures for Transfers In and Converts In indicate a greater proportion of non-Covenant than Covenant individuals entering the congregations in the areas examined. Region rather than period of organization appears to be more essential in interpreting the figures. The California congregations are consistently higher for all three periods than the other areas; Illinois and Minnesota exhibit quite similar figures, with the former higher for Period III; the East Coast tends more toward the higher California figures for Period I congregations but drops in the later periods. The fewer number of East Coast congregations for Periods II and III might tend to influence the results.

An examination of Converts In reveals much the same pattern as seen for Transfers In, with non-Covenant Converts being proportionally greater in number than the Covenant Converts. Here, too, region is apparently more essential than period of organization though there is greater variation within the areas considered. The high figures for this item perhaps reflect to a degree both Sunday-school and youth programs since it is from these groups that the converts are to a large share recruited. It would be assumed therefore that the congregations with a Sunday-school membership

comprising mainly Covenant children would show lower figures in the Converts column in Table 5.12 B and conversely, those with a large share of outside children would also show correspondingly higher figures to reflect the greater share of these among the Converts in.

Table 5.12 A Membership Changes for Illinois, Minnesota, California and East Coast in Permill of Total State/Conference Membership: Averages for 1983 and 1984

Area		Transfer In Cov/Oth	Convert In Cov/Oth	Deaths	Transfer Out	Dropped	Number of Congreg- ations
Illi- nois	I	5.2 / 18.2	5.0 / 13.6	8.8	11.2	11.3	33
	II	.7 / 2.6	1.3 / 2.1	.7	7.1	7.5	11
	III	2.0 / 10.3	8.0 / 21.4	.7	4.7	3.3	20
Minne- sota	I	4.3 / 15.5	7.5 / 7.2	10.5	14.3	10.3	65
	II	1.4 / 4.6	1.0 / 4.0	1.1	2.8	4.8	21
	III	1.8 / 5.8	.3 / 3.0	.3	3.0	.9	11
Cali- fornia	I	3.3 / 15.7	2.4 / 9.5	4.5	9.0	9.3	20
	II	1.7 / 13.3	1.6 / 8.1	2.0	8.7	10.9	17
	III	4.1 / 20.7	3.7 / 19.6	1.1	12.9	11.1	35
East Coast	I	3.9 / 16.7	8.5 / 16.2	13.5	14.1	13.7	42
	II	.3 / .5	.3 / 1.7	.1	.3	.7	5
	III	2.9 / 2.1	.9 / 2.0	.7	.9	.1	4

The three remaining items, Deaths, Transfer Out and Dropped, combined represent the losses in the congregations. While the first two are self-explanatory, the category Dropped is an artificial classification of inactive persons whose names are removed from the congregational records. Natural for the category Deaths is the higher frequency of deaths in those congregations organized during Period I. This is further support of the notion that the older congregations also have an older constituency, which increases the probability of these congregations retaining more of the ethnic heritage of the founders. If the frequency of deaths by period were any indication of congregation age, the Eastern congregations are oldest,

followed by Minnesota, Illinois and California.

As for Transfer Out, the greatest effect is seen in California with an overall average for the periods of 10 permill. With the exception of this Western state, there is a tendency for the older congregations to show higher Transfer Out figures. The pattern for Dropped is similar, with older congregations losing more for this reason than the younger congregations. Again, however, California is the exception.

Table 5.12 B Ratio of non-Covenant to Covenant
Transfers In and Converts In

		Transfer	Convert
Area		in	in
Illi- nois	I	3.5	2.7
	II	3.7	1.6
	III	5.2	3.4
Minne- sota	I	3.6	.9
	II	3.3	4.0
	III	3.2	2.8
Cali- fornia	I	4.8	4.0
	II	7.8	5.1
	III	5.0	5.3
East Coast	I	4.3	1.9
	II	1.7	5.7
	III	.7	6.7

In all, California is the area with the greatest turn-over and mobility, judging from the figures here. This state has also the greatest influx of "others". Of the larger states, it is no doubt the youngest in terms of when congregations became organized and in terms of late additions; it has also the fewest deaths registered.

By the same token, the East Coast appears to have the least constituency turn-over possibly due to the older congregations, which is upheld by the figures for the categories Death and Transfer Out. Fewer congregations were started here during Periods II and III than for the other areas.

5.7.4.2 Individual Membership Data

Included in the 1983 Covenant members survey were two questions relating to length of association with the ECC and denominational affiliation prior to joining the Covenant. As for association with ECC, the responses can be divided between those having been associated "for all or most of their lives" (49 percent) and those who became members "as adults", "upon confession" (and not included among the 49 percent), "through marriage" or "through membership in a congregation which joined ECC" (51 percent). The 45 percent with a longer association with the Covenant comprises those indicating that one or both parents were members of ECC (35 percent) and those whose parents had not been affiliated with the denomination (14 percent).

By region, the proportion of the constituency having belonged to ECC for all or most of their lives is highest in the Core region with 51 percent and somewhat lower in both the Western region (41 percent) and the Eastern region (38 percent). To the extent that these figures are representative for the denomination as a whole, the results of the survey suggest higher frequencies of membership turnover in the Western and Eastern regions than in the Core region. These figures are quite sensitive to the presence of congregations with older constituencies and congregations recently accepted into ECC.

Those individuals with previous affiliation in another denomination (240 persons which corresponds approximately to those with shorter affiliation in ECC) were asked to designate the denomination(s). The responses most often given are presented in Table 5.13 by relative frequency for the Covenant as a whole and by region.

According to the table, four denominations show relatively high representation among this segment of the Covenant constituency. They are the Baptists (15.8 percent) particularly in the Core and Western regions; the "other" Lutheran with a higher representation in the Western region; the Methodists, high in the Core and Eastern regions; and the Presbyterians, with a frequency in the Eastern region of more than twice that of the Covenant overall and, according to this study, the single most represented denomination on the regional level. Of the three regions, the Eastern constituency degenerates most from the distribution of denominations as seen in the table within the Covenant as a whole. However, the regional patterns are perhaps more a reflection of the general distribution of denominations in the United States than a particular function of the Covenant on the regional level.

Table 5.13 Previous Denominational Affiliation

	Covenant	Core	Western	Eastern
Augustana Lutheran	3.7	8.0	2.4	--
Evangelical Free	3.7	3.4	4.7	2.9
Congregationalist	4.2	4.6	1.2	7.4
Baptist	15.8	14.9	15.3	7.6
Catholic	1.7	1.1	2.4	1.5
Other Lutheran	11.7	11.5	15.3	7.4
Swedish Baptist	3.7	5.7	2.4	2.9
Presbyterian	9.2	6.9	2.4	20.6
Methodist	10.0	12.6	5.9	11.8
Combination	20.0	16.1	24.7	19.1
Others	11.3	9.2	16.5	7.4
None	5.0	5.7	7.1	1.5
	100%	100%	100%	100%
n=	236	87	85	64

Source: 1983 Covenant Members Survey

The three bodies of Swedish origin, Augustana Lutheran, Evangelical Free and the Swedish Baptists rank rather low in the Covenant as a whole, being most represented in the Core region and least represented in the Eastern region. In the Covenant as a whole the combined frequency of the three bodies of Swedish origin is outweighed by both the Baptist and "other" Lutheran denominations.

The designation of more than one denomination ("combination") is the category with highest frequencies in all regions and for the Covenant overall. This category comprises for the most part those denominations listed individually in the table as well as others also included in the category "other". Fully 25 percent of the Western constituency included in Table 5.13 indicated multiple affiliations prior to joining ECC.

With reference to age, the results of the study of Covenant members indicate as expected that the older constituency tend to be more firmly rooted in the Covenant denomination as shown by the responses to the two questions dealt with here. In addition to the denominations representative for both age groups (Baptists, Other Lutheran, Methodist), the older age group also favored the Augustana Lutheran and Evangelical Free bodies, whereas the younger age group tended to come from a background of Presbyterian and "other" denominations as well.

5.7.5 Demographical Data

In addition to what has been discussed elsewhere in this chapter, the results of the 1983 Covenant members' survey include several items of a general demographical nature which will be presented in a discursive fashion in this section. The various variables have been cross-tabulated with age groups and by region. Two age categories have been constructed in an attempt to single out and represent both the earliest generation of Covenant members among the survey sample (65 years of age and older) and a group of subsequent generations comprising the remainder of the survey sample, that is, those born approximately 1920 and after. The higher age ranges consist of 132 persons, the younger group, of 351 persons.

The age distribution of the survey sample is as follows: 15-29 years: 13 percent; 30-44 years: 30 percent; 45-64 years: 33 percent; 65 and older: 23 percent. Compared to a 1976 study (Church Profile 1976), the 1983 study has a higher proportion of categories 30-44 and 65+ and a lower proportion of ages 15-29. The differences in proportions in the two age extremes are perhaps somewhat due to the nature of the 1983 study, which appealed more to the older congregational constituency and therefore produced a greater frequency of response among them. What is seen here is that the relatively disproportionate number of older members observed earlier (see Section 4.8) has disappeared. The 1983 survey shows a larger proportion of both elderly and youth among its members than is seen for the Covenant in general and in the Core and Western regions, which is perhaps reflected as well in the higher proportions of "single" people and "widows/widowers" in the Eastern region compared to the other regions and the Covenant as a whole. The breakdown of civil status for the Covenant according to the study is "single" 13 percent, "married" 75 percent, "widowed" 12 percent.

In terms of general population mobility, a comparison of state of birth and state of residence indicates about the same propensity (50 percent) toward changing state of residence. By region it was found that a somewhat larger percentage (56 percent) of the Western constituency had changed state of residence than was observed in comparison to the Eastern region constituency, at 40 percent.

Used as an indication of social status, a breakdown of the occupational structure of the Covenant constituency according to the 1983 study shows a steady increase in social mobility. The approximate equivalent of three generations can be differentiated in the results of the study which show that, of the four divisions of labor: farm, unskilled, skilled and professional, the parents (fathers) of the those born prior to 1920 (see above) to 77 percent fall under the categories "farm" and "unskilled";

those born prior to 1920 to 80 percent belonged to the categories "farm", "unskilled" and "skilled"; and the younger age group, those born after 1920 belonged (to 81 percent) to the categories "skilled" and "professional". A corresponding increase in level of education is seen with 76 percent of the upper age group having attended high school and some university, whereas 72 percent of the lower age group had both university and post-graduate education.

5.7.6 The Swedish Element

In Section 5.7.4.1 it was observed that a majority of new-comers to the denomination were of non-Covenant backgrounds, the division of which was discussed in Section 5.7.4.2. It is assumed that the pattern of the 1983-84 statistics which showed a larger proportion of non-Covenant than Covenant newcomers existed for many years prior to the recording of the event in statistics. Undoubtedly, these newcomers did not share the specific historical and national heritage of the denomination at large. The issue to be dealt with in this section concerns indications of and the extent to which the Swedish element exists within the denomination, the centers in which one might expect to find the survival of the heritage, various expressions of it and attitudes concerning its existence from outside the Covenant.

One telltale indicator of the survival of the Swedish element within the denomination is the origin of family names. A glance at several lists of names of denominational functionaries, officers, board members, committee members, conference and denominational leaders, and inactive and active pastors shows a strong predominance of names with Swedish roots. The single exception to this in the 1983 Covenant Yearbook is the list of 1983 pastoral ordinants, all but one of whom came from Covenant congregations and of which 29 out of 37 names were conspicuously non-Swedish.

The presence of the Swedish element might also be examined on the congregational level with the help of an item included in the 1983 Congregations' questionnaire concerning the percentage of congregational membership sharing Swedish ancestry. The results, given in percent of the congregational membership, are presented in Table 5.14 along with the period of organization for the respective congregations.

From the table it is seen that the larger contingents of Swedish ancestry within the Covenant are mainly located in congregations organized during Period I. Period II and III congregations show very few consti-

tuencies with more than 50 percent Swedish ancestry. Fully four-fifths of the Period II and III congregations had less than 25 percent Swedish ancestry. A further breakdown shows that 30 percent of Period I congregations had 10 percent or less Swedish ancestry: similar figures for Periods II and III are 52 and 65 percent respectively.

The findings appear to support assumptions made earlier to the effect that the Swedish element, to the degree that it exists within the denomination, is found in older congregations to a much greater degree than in the younger congregations.

Table 5.14 Year of Organization and Swedish Background:
1981 Congregations

Year Org.	Percentage of Swedish Background							
	1-25		26-50		50-80		Total	
	N	%	N	%	%	%	N	%
-1930	27	51	16	30	10	19	53	100
1931-1960	51	31	9	14	3	5	63	100
1961-1981	<u>56</u>	83	<u>9</u>	13	<u>3</u>	4	<u>68</u>	100
Total	134		34		16		184	

Source: 1983 Congregations Survey

Further evidence of the remnants of Swedish ancestry on the individual level can also be gotten from the responses to questions in the 1983 Covenant Members' survey concerning the national origins of both the individual and his/her spouse. Just over half, 53 percent, of the survey sample indicated their "Swedish background", with the highest frequency seen in the Core region, at 69 percent, followed by the Western region, 49 percent and the Eastern region, 34 percent. It was indicated in 36 percent of the cases that the spouse had Swedish ancestry and that both spouses were of Swedish origin in 23 percent of the cases. The regional differences reflect the greater concentrations of Swedish ancestry in the Core and Western regions in comparison to the relatively younger Eastern constituency (see Section 5.7.4.1). As expected, a higher percentage of the older age group indicated Swedish ancestry (71 percent) in comparison to the younger group with 47 percent. A cross-tabulation of "own background" by "spouse background" resulted in 61 percent of the constituency indicating Swedish ancestry in the family. This figure, however, should be considered

in light of the bias of the study toward congregations with higher percentages of Swedish ancestry; it therefore records somewhat more of an upper level of Swedish ancestry among the Covenant constituency and not an average.

To what extent, then, is this heritage maintained and celebrated in the churches? Again, such a question was included in the first questionnaire and the replies indicate that one certain holiday period, that surrounding Christmas, is instrumental here. The occurrence of such celebrations on the congregational level was indicated by 47 percent of the Period I congregations, 40 percent of the Period II and 30 percent of Period III congregations. Of the specific forms of celebration, most often mentioned were Smörgåsbord, Julotta, Advent and Lucia.

An essential aspect of identity is the perspective of others. The question might, therefore, be raised as to how the Covenant is seen in the eyes of others. Such a question was put before the pastors answering the questionnaire in the form of alternatives to be checked. To the question as to how the Covenant was regarded by the pastor's non-Covenant colleagues, the alternatives were chosen in the following order (several alternatives were checked in some cases):

1. openness 124
2. ethnic background 62
3. doctrinal non-alignment 55
4. other (evangelism, freedom, friendliness) 22
5. theological rigidity 7
6. in-group attitude 7

Where several alternative were checked, choices were, in the order of appearance:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| First choice- | 1,4,3,2,5 |
| Second | - 2,3,1,6,5 |
| Third | - 2,5,6,3 |
| Fourth | - 2,4 |

While the number one choice, "openness" is rather non-committal and ill-defined, the high placement of "ethnic background" and the last placing of "in-group attitude" would suggest the Covenant to be seen by non-Covenant pastors as an inclusive, as opposed to exclusive, group better known by its ethnic heritage, that is, its historical roots, than by its theology, though this, too, in the light of the gradual Americanization of the denomination is to a degree a residual element.

There appears, however, to emerge a certain pattern in the ranking of the alternatives with the very high rating for "openness" supported by both "doctrinal non-alignment" and themes similar to "freedom", but also substantiated by the apparent correspondingly lower ratings for "theological rigidity" and "in-group attitude", assuming of course a polarization of choices 1 and 3 against choices 5 and 6.

This characterization of the Covenant around related themes of "openness", "non-alignment" and "freedom", etc. as perceived by Covenant pastors of their non-Covenant colleagues is of interest for the denomination as such. In a broader perspective, and related to the topic of this section on "The Swedish Element", the significance of the characterization is perhaps most profound in relation to the Covenant of Sweden. In an analytical (individual level) study of "religious language", Stromberg (1981) demonstrates in a penetrating way the profundity of a complex of words, among which are openness as opposed to closedness and themes around setting up and breaking boundaries (p. 69, 74f), which, in the words of the author, "provide a system for relating social interaction, personal realization and divine contact" (p. 81) in SMF.

5.7.7 Other Ethnic Groups

Throughout the years several congregations have joined the denomination with membership compositions more ethnically defined than what thus far has been referred to simply by the categories "Covenant" and "non-Covenant", "Swedish" and "non-Swedish". The 1978 Covenant Yearbook includes among the congregations several of varying backgrounds: 1 Estonian, 1 Assyrian, 4 Black, 5 Korean, 8 Spanish-speaking and 12 consisting mainly of native Americans in Alaska. Apart from the Alaskan congregations which generally were former mission posts, the ethnic congregations were mainly situated in two states; Illinois (Chicago) and California, some of which became established in the late sixties/early seventies; most of which, however, organized a decade later.

5.8 Summary: Period III

As in previous chapters the various aspects of the Covenant will be related to the meanings of Covenant identity and Covenant environment as suggested in Chapter 2. And furthermore, the results of Chapter 5 will be discussed

in relation to the findings of the previous two chapters in Chapter 6.

Beginning with the mechanical aspects of identity, which indicate something of the status of the organization in terms of statistical data about the congregations and the denominational constituency, they show as in years past a continued increase both in the number of congregations and in terms of membership. Along with increases of 182 congregations were recorded 88 as withdrawals or dissolutions comprising mainly older and smaller congregations from the Core region. The larger proportion of membership increases for the period as a whole was attributed to increases on the local level, and not to the addition of new congregations which, however, more than compensated for membership losses through dissolving and withdrawing congregations. Sunday-school figures declined steadily until about 1980, resulting in a net loss of nearly 10,000 members during the 25-year period. It was noticed that a relative slack period in membership recruitments occurred between approximately 1967 and 1974, which was related to membership decreases in most denominations in America for about the same period of time. In general, the Covenant congregations tended to become larger, as seen in the size distribution and in the membership averages, which increased from 112 in 1960 to 146 in 1984. A comparison of size distribution of several states shows quite distinct variations; in Illinois the congregations tended on the whole to be larger, in Minnesota much smaller and medium size in California and on the East Coast.

Geographically, the region showing most increase is the Core followed by the Western and Eastern regions in that order. Minnesota, Illinois, California and Florida were singled out as the states accounting for most growth in terms of congregations, accounting together for 50 percent of the additions. Over 90 percent of the congregations joining were newly established congregations.

In a separate section dealing with very recent data on the Covenant including material not previously recorded in itemized fashion in the denominational statistics, it was shown for the states examined that the larger proportion of newcomers to the Covenant, both those transferring their membership from other denominations and the newly converted members, were of non-Covenant backgrounds. An indication of these "non-Covenant" backgrounds was obtained from a 1983 survey of Covenant members. The study revealed the representation of several denominations in the Covenant to varying degrees and with regional variations. Up to 25 % of the members of non-Covenant background indicated that they had belonged to more than one other denomination prior to joining the Covenant. It was also observed that several (non-Swedish) ethnic congregations had joined the Covenant, and that while Covenant members' names disclosed a clear Swedish bias, the names of newly educated Covenant pastors did not. Finally, the presence of

the Swedish element as described in this chapter should also be included here due to its existence as a carry-over and a residual matter; not characteristic of single congregations and even less so of the denomination.

Among the aspects of deliberate identity are included the Commission on Interchurch Relations which continued into Period III with the task of studying the issue of Covenant affiliations with ecumenical bodies and merger possibilities with other denominations. The question of affiliation with an international body and three national associations was put before the Covenant constituency in a referendum with the result that the issue was defeated at large and subsequently dropped by the commission. The question of merger was considered with several specific denominations and talks initiated with conceivable partners. In 1975, according to the record, the matter was no longer considered a current issue. On the congregational level, however, there were indications of cooperative activities with other bodies on a practical basis. During the period relations with other Swedish-American bodies and with the Covenant in Sweden were maintained regularly on a formal level, consisting in the latter case of representation at each other's annual conferences.

An accounting of Covenant institutions showed an increase in the number of retirement homes in existence and it was suggested in connection here that these comprised a potential haven for the maintenance of the Swedish heritage and culture of the denomination.

Covenant environment for Period III as determined by the arena from which members are recruited is to the greater extent American. To the extent that the Swedish element is still present in the congregations, it can no longer be considered characteristic; rather it is any longer a residual matter as is true of the former Swedish quality of the Covenant in general. As seen by the representation of denominations of former affiliation among present Covenant members, it is also quite apparent that the environment is convincingly, but not exclusively Protestant. The exceptions to this include the presence of some former Catholics and the several congregations of varying ethnic and racial backgrounds. Thus, Covenant environment both includes American Protestantism and extends, as it were, beyond it.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The Task

Various aspects encompassing the one-hundred year history of the Evangelical Covenant Church of America have been examined in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. An attempt has been made to address numerous elements of Covenant identity and environment for each of the periods as outlined in Chapter 2. These two concepts and their application to the present study were discussed in Chapter 2 and the problem in the study was stated in terms of change in Covenant identity over time.

Identity as a concept is normally applied in sociological contexts in relation to the individual level of analysis. It is suggested in this study, however, that the concept is applicable as well to the organizational level of analysis following the scheme described in Section 2.3 above. On the one hand there are the mechanical properties of organizational identity including items such as location, expansion, statistics, etc. which transpire as the result of various processes within the organization itself. There are also the deliberate properties which comprise the intentional, set-forth and voluntary features such as goals, policy, programs, decisions, etc. A decision to begin an evangelization drive, for example, might result in membership increases. The decision to conduct the drive is a property of deliberate organizational identity; membership increases resulting from the drive represent a mechanical property of organizational identity. The combination of both the mechanical and the deliberate properties of Covenant identity comprises the modes of the identity of the organization and correspond to the lower-order individual identity outlined by Dashefsky (Section 2.2).

Environment was discussed in relation to its place in open systems approaches as a crucial element in understanding organizational development and change (Section 2.4). In connection here, it was pointed out that apart from organizational changes brought on by environmental conditions, the environment itself may undergo changes. Therefore, in considering changes in the identity of an organization, it is also necessary to examine the

function of the environment and changes occurring within it. Such changes were discussed in relation to Emery's and Trist's four types of environmental texture which vary according to the following: the degree to which strategy is organized within the organization; the presence of competitive organizations sharing the same environment; and instability caused by inter-related forces within the environment itself. The interrelation of organizational identity and environment was discussed in terms of a dialectical process which provides the organization with a reference system which functions in similar fashion to the "general organizing referent" of Dashefsky's higher-order identity (Section 2.2).

In Chapters 3, 4 and 5 numerous aspects of the organizational identity of the Covenant and its environment have been examined for each of the three periods. In the summaries to each chapter the various facets discussed in the chapters were placed within the conceptual frame of identity and environment. The task now is to relate the findings of each chapter to the wider, comprehensive issue of change in Covenant identity.

6.2 Deliberate and Mechanical Properties of Covenant Identity

The deliberate properties of Covenant identity discussed in this study concern both the inner structure of the Covenant, i.e. it's institutions, development of children and youth activities, matters of language, various projects, etc. and projections outwards, i.e. relations with other bodies, domestic missions, establishment of congregations, etc. These activities were present in the initial years of the Covenant to varying degrees and a basic pattern was established by the early organizers which influenced the structure of the Covenant thereafter.

Aside from development and expansion on most fronts, the types of Covenant institutions remained basically stable throughout the years (Table 5.8) while the immigrant centers and Swedish day schools disappeared as the number of emigrants arriving dropped, the educational facilities, the benevolent institutions, the hospitals and retirement homes all remain, albeit in enlarged form and in greater numbers in some cases. These institutions, while vital being aspects of the identity of the Covenant as such and instrumental in maintaining and promulgating Covenant identity on the whole, did not provide the Covenant constituency with a complete array of institutional services as suggested in the "institutional completeness" approach to organizations (Section 2.1), and were not per se specific or distinguishing characteristics of the Covenant. Rather, the Covenant

institutions should be considered both in the context of such institutions in the United States, which are often owned and operated under the auspices of religious organizations, and in the sense of functioning as public service institutions as well as denominational institutions. The extent to which these institutions functioned in their various capacities to preserve and maintain the specific "Swedish" quality of Covenant identity is, however, an essential component of the identity of the Covenant.

In the area of relations with other religious bodies, talks of merger and of affiliation on the denominational level never resulted in formal actions despite much intensive deliberations regarding the issue. The closest the Covenant came to joining or merging with another body, as far as could be determined from the documents was in the early 1920's when it was agreed from within the Covenant to join forces with the Evangelical Free Church, a move in the end rejected by the latter. Prior to this time, the talks of merger with the Congregationalists and the forcefulness of the American denomination regarding the issue only served to reinforce the Swedish emigrant inclinations of the early Covenant which, it is suggested here, was basically an association for Swedish Mission Congregations regulated to a greater extent by national and/or cultural considerations than by theological or religious motives. A change in this early Covenant identity came after approximately 1915 (see discussion below). Thus, the inclinations of the Covenant during Period II towards cooperation with mainly Swedish-American groups are an extension of this gravitation toward groups of similar heritage, but without it being an overriding issue in the Covenant any longer.

Other than being a member of the International Federation of Free Evangelical Churches which the Covenant joined upon the formation of the Federation in 1948, the denomination has consistently refrained from formal affiliation with other ecumenical bodies (Section 5.6). This might be interpreted variously as an expression of indecision on the part of the Covenant and perhaps divisiveness within the Covenant constituency; as an inclination to remain "coolly" aloft from other groups; or in terms of more intentional and historically rooted aspirations towards a non-committal and open stance (Section 5.7.6) vis-à-vis other religious bodies. The decision to not affiliate formally as a denomination with other bodies but to urge cooperation on other levels within the church (Section 5.6.1) coupled with the de facto presence of members of other denominational backgrounds and the characterization of the Covenant from the outside as "open" (see Section 5.7.4) lends credence to the conclusion that an attitude of "openness", of "freedom" was a distinguishing aspect of Covenant identity, perhaps more so in the later years than prior to World War II.

Although the focus of attention changed (Section 3.9.4; also see below) in the course of time, on different occasions it was bespoken openly and formally brought to the attention of the constituency that the Covenant was to serve its "countrymen" (Section 3.4). And though the consistency of "countrymen" (see below) altered with time (Section 4.8), it is apparent that despite these changes, increases in membership were experienced in every situation, as is seen in what has been referred to as the mechanical properties of Covenant identity. There has been a relatively even annual growth for every period and, with few exceptions, in congregations and denominational membership despite major changes in the course of time, despite the withdrawal of some 220 congregations during the 100 years, despite the source of new members drying up after nearly 5 decades and despite declines in religious activity on the national level in the 1960's and 1970's. New congregations were being established on a continual basis both within states of Covenant representation and in other states. The fact that the Covenant early on had established a broad base beyond the Core region (see especially Table 5.2) proved strategically essential for continued expansion and growth of the denomination. The expansion occurred through early mission activities which took place largely through the efforts of Covenant representatives and itinerant preachers who follow in the footsteps of the Swedish settlers in their Westward migrations and who maintained a foot in the doors of the Swedish mission congregations to the East (Section 3.9.1; Appendix A). The Eastern region with its many associated congregations contributed greatly to continued growth during most of Period II when growth otherwise periodically came to a virtue stand-still for the Covenant (Section 4.3.2). From the Western region came the addition of many congregations during the early part of Period III at a time when, nationally, other denominations in America were experiencing declining membership figures.

In terms of identity change, the developments discussed under the heading "mechanical properties" show the growth of the denomination in terms of membership and in the number of congregations (Tables 3.2; 4.2; 5.1), in terms of the expansion of the denomination with the establishment of congregations in new areas (Section 3.6; 4.3.2; Table 5.2), and in terms of increases in the size-structure of the congregations (see particularly Table 5.6).

Certain elements of the early identity of the Covenant as defined by their "Swedish" quality survived to a degree into Period III (Section 5.7.5). Especially within the older congregations, those started during Period I, there are still high levels of Swedish ancestry among the constituency. Also, Swedish culture survives here to a certain extent: family names disclose a clear Swedish bias, and in some circles outside the

Covenant the ethnic quality of the denomination is still a distinguishing characteristic. The age distribution, which for many years reflected the narrow age range of the Swedish emigrants, became more evenly distributed according to later studies; however, the over-representation of women in the Covenant, which was the inverse of the emigration population, remained to a degree even in later years. The name "Swedish" disappeared from the denomination formally during Period II but the hospital in Chicago, for example, remains the Swedish Hospital. Translated Swedish hymns appear in the Covenant Hymnals.

The "Swedish" quality diminished gradually both in a formal and practical sense to the extent that its presence during Period III might be characterized as residual; that is, a survival of the Swedish national heritage of the constituency.

In the following section various aspects of the mechanical and deliberate properties of Covenant identity will be considered as they are related to environment. The section is divided into three parts, each one corresponding to developments in the degree to which congruence is seen between Covenant identity and Covenant environment. In discussing these developments, reference will be made to the categories of environmental texture suggested by Emery/Trist.

6.3 Covenant Environment and Covenant Identity

6.3.1 The "Swedish" Covenant

The early "narrow" environment of the denomination referred to that of the Swedish emigrants to America who had settled in the mid-West states, basically the area referred to as the Core region. More specifically, it comprised the areas represented by the many gatherings of Mission Friends within this area (Section 3.3). It was in this area that the first congregations which joined the Covenant were located and the region continued to provide the Covenant with a larger stream of congregations than did the Western and Eastern regions. On a "broader" level the environment during Period I can be extended to include, in addition to the Swedish immigrants in America, even "Sweden", which was not only a source of members but was also relied upon to a certain degree for denominational leaders, teachers, preachers, evangelists and organizers, and, furthermore, served as a source of ideas, materials, patterns of organization and moral support as well

(see for example Sections 3.9.3 and 3.9.4). Sweden remained to a limited degree a part of the Covenant environment for several decades as evidenced by the presence of Swedish visiting preachers and representatives among the American Covenant congregations as late as the early 1940's (Section 4.9.1).

A further aspect of the early environment of the Covenant is the presence of other denominations of Swedish origins which also contended for the loyalties of the Swedish mission congregations and the Swedish emigrant population in general (Section 3.3). As pointed out, not only was there competition for the many independent mission congregations, but also something similar to "congregation stealing" from other denominations occurred as well. In this sense, the other denominations, too, were a vital part of Covenant environment.

The discussion of the early Covenant identity in the foregoing section and the location of the Covenant environment herein suggest that both aspects may be characterized by a specific "Swedish" quality, relating to the national and cultural heritage of the Covenant constituency. This quality was reinforced from within the organization in several ways (see the discussion on deliberate properties of Covenant identity) and externally through the environment.

The presence of competitive forces (comprising the Congregationalists, the Free and the Covenant) was an integral part of Covenant environment from the very beginning. Thus, the environmental texture resembles that of Type 3 in the Emery-Trist classification characterized in part by distinct objectives and means of achieving them, a continuation of Type 2 texture, but more specifically by "...the existence of an number of similar organizations (in) the environmental field." (ibid p.25) According to the authors, in such a situation the organization reacts by devising operations for the realization of the established goals. Operations similar to what Emery/Trist describe were initiated very early by the denominational leaders, as seen in the intensive efforts made in sending representatives, preachers and missionaries to the areas of Swedish settlements and to the places where mission societies and gatherings existed, for the good cause of the Covenant (Appendix A). The situation was experienced in similar terms by the other bodies involved as is witnessed in the fierce battles that had gone on in the Swedish (American) press (Section 3.9.1) over the issue of church organization, and by efforts on the part of the other denominations in recruiting Swedish Mission congregations. The frequency with which Covenant representatives were sent out and the decision to turn this activity over to the district conferences is an indication that the competition had diminished by 1910. Few new congregations were started during Period I by the Covenant after 1910 and the frequency of

congregations joining after approximately 1915 was at its lowest level for Period I.

The complexity of the environment with the presence of several competing denominations had the effect of forcing the Covenant to great lengths to consolidate its organization. The interplay of the various environmental components is similar to the process of identity formation discussed in Section 2.2 wherein the environment acts to define and, in a sense, create the organization. The westward migrations of the Swedish settlers were accompanied by the establishment of mission congregations there, and not long after, representatives and missionaries were sent by the Covenant to these areas. Similar activities on the part of the Covenant took place on the East Coast where many mission congregations were already established. The efforts of the Covenant to expand its arena of activity to the East and West represent a broadening of the environment beyond the initial boundaries of the Core region and the Swedish mission gatherings there. The same applies to Canada, where the Covenant became established with the arrival of Swedish immigrants there.

Simultaneously with the geographical expansion, efforts were made on various levels within the Covenant to ensure the maintenance of the Swedish language. Such measures included the establishment of day schools for the children and the deliberate use of the Swedish language for teaching in the educational institutions. Swedish was the official language of the organization and many pastors relied on a basic knowledge of Swedish within the congregations, especially among the children and youth, to enable them to carry on their work.

The "Swedish" quality of Covenant identity and environment remained intact and unthreatened, at least outwardly, until around 1915. The events just prior to and during World War I must have come as a shock for many of the leaders and most of the older Covenant constituency. First, a study of Sunday-school activity revealed that English was already being used in many Sunday-school and youth organizations and that materials in both English and Swedish were needed if the churches were to hold on to their youth. The war brought with it a suspicion of all foreign languages. It was difficult to obtain literature, including Bibles, and it was forbidden in some areas to hold public meetings other than in English (Section 3.10). On the one hand, the effects of an even wider environment not earlier coupled with the Covenant were making their impression on the Covenant constituency, and on the other hand, the issue was being forced due to the events surrounding the war. In addition, the influx of emigrants from other countries including Sweden had decreased drastically by the end of the war, cutting off a continual supply of potential recruits to the congregations.

In essence, the "Swedish" quality of Covenant environment and identity remained visible well into Period II. This is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that until the latter part of Period II, denominational growth occurred mainly from within the Covenant congregations themselves and most of the congregations joining were former associate-member Swedish mission congregations.

6.3.2 The "Swedish-American" Covenant

By approximately 1915 there was a clear indication that the "Swedish" quality of Covenant environment was being impinged upon to such an extent that measures had to be set in to meet the challenge (Section 3.10).

Three factors - the gradual "Americanization" of the denomination from the youth up which had begun; the sharp decrease in the arrival of Swedish emigrants; and the events surrounding World War I and their effects on immigrant groups - were instrumental in creating a situation similar to what Emery/Trist refer to as Type 4: a "turbulent field" (p. 26) in the environmental texture due to changes in the environment itself, more particularly in the case here, a natural process of assimilation into American society, restraints to the flow of emigrants into the country and the onset of the war. Such conditions correspond to the trends often resulting from regulation and other social forces (p. 26) and which, according to Emery/Trist, lead to high levels of uncertainty within the organization and a situation of instability (p. 28). The objective for the organization must now be to seek solutions for regaining stability. These solutions, according to Emery/Trist, have the effect of stabilizing the "turbulent field", an effect similar to that achieved through the implementation of "operations" in Type 3. In this "turbulent field", what emerges to hold the organization intact are "values that have overriding significance for all members of the field" (p. 28). For society, such values are the generally accepted social values.

In the case of the Covenant, it is suggested here that the values of overriding influence concern the immigrant religious organization which emerged from and was continually legitimized, supported, solidified, and backed by the efforts of the organization to remain an independent ethnic, emigrant, religious group. These were the same values called upon to legitimize a separate school for pastors and the same values which rejected mergers with other denominations. To the extent that these values could be disengaged from dependency on the original language of the denomination and instead could be "literally" translated into the language of the American society, the organization succeeded in stabilizing the "turbulence" of Type

4 environment and recede, as it were, to a less complicated environmental texture. It is suggested here that this process of disengagement is tantamount to a change in identity for the Covenant; a change not so much in the sense of a sudden and definite alteration, and not characterized by a radical adoption of another identity, but characterized more as a gradual shift and an initiation of a process which in time would transform the Covenant away from its status as an immigrant denomination.

As has been suggested above and as was described more fully in Chapter 3 (Section 3.10), the process of transformation herein observed got under way already before the end of Period I with the implementation of measures aimed at satisfying the demands for more Sunday-school and youth material in English, more pastors fluent in English, the need for English publications, songbooks, etc. with the continued presence of "Swedish" along side. The process continued on into Period II as is seen in the items related to Covenant identity in Chapter 4 (Section 4.9.2). Formally, the working language of the conference became English in 1930. The name of the denomination was officially translated and adopted in 1937. The regular use of English worship services delayed as long as the 1940's and 1950's, and Swedish was not dropped from the names of some congregations until the late 1950's and later in isolated cases. It was noticed that the transition in language on the congregational level spread over several decades, beginning first in the Sunday schools and youth groups and in the worship services on an alternating basis somewhat later (Table 4.15).

This transitional state of the Covenant resembles the environment Type 2 in the typology. Absent is the "turbulent" situation of Type 4 and, despite the presence of other organizations within the same environment, there is a distinctive absence of competition in the sense observed of Period I. The environment is still influenced by the "Swedish" quality though to some degree in a negative sense: for example, if the denomination was affected at all by the Swedish migration, it was no doubt in a negative way considering the higher frequency of re-migration to Sweden than migration from Sweden (Section 4.2). Furthermore, many of the older Swedish congregations, too small to bear themselves, were disbanding at a more rapid pace than new congregations were being established, at least during the early part of Period II (Table 4.3). Furthermore, the survival of the Swedish element in the congregations was no doubt intimidating to any non-Scandinavians desiring fellowship in these congregations.

On the other hand, the continued influence of the Swedish environment also benefited the Covenant as can be seen in the addition to the Covenant of many former associate-member congregations, which accounted for nearly 50 percent of all congregations joining during the period. At the same time, however, new congregations were being established in states without

previous Covenant representation and without large numbers of Swedish immigrant populations, which suggests the starting of activities in the "American" environment.

There appears to be no evidence that the gradual replacement of the Swedish-based environment by an increasingly American-determined environment caused a transformation in environment texture. Any tendency toward a shift would have been in the direction of a less complicated texture with much of the Covenant's efforts being directed toward the denomination itself. Relations with other denominations were carried on in a spirit of cooperation and not competition. Despite the situation of potential competition involving any number of American religious bodies, there are no indications that Americans were being recruited into the Covenant in large numbers apart from American congregations which joined the Covenant. The total membership of the denomination shows a gradual increase during the entire period with the former associate-member congregations accounting for a majority of the gains.

Even without particularly large gains in membership from the American environment, the situation of cooperation with various denominations which began towards the end of Period I and continued into Period II, first with denominations of Swedish backgrounds and gradually expanding to include various established American Protestant denominations and religious organizations, signifies a major alteration of Covenant identification away from the Swedish ethnic heritage and towards a decidedly American arena. This process of re-identification or identity formation corresponds to a process of interaction (see Dashefsky, Section 2.2) whereby the Covenant links itself with "significant others", i.e. American Protestant denominations and reference groups. Characteristic of the "Swedish-American" Covenant is the expanded environment which includes the American segment, accompanied by a gradual transformation of identity, a process which lagged behind the broadened base of Covenant environment. Thus, for the "Swedish-American" Covenant, identity did not totally correspond to environment; the outcome of the process of identity formation, however, would be a synchronization of the two.

6.3.3 The "American" Covenant

However, at the end of Period II, the majority of new members were still recruited from within the Covenant ranks, that is, with Covenant backgrounds. The Covenant denomination, though clearly and explicitly identifying with Protestantism, maintained certain apprehensions concerning a wider acceptance of and affiliation with Protestant and other ecumenical-

ly oriented bodies on the level of the constituency as voiced in a referendum on affiliation (Section 5.6).

Towards the end of Period II, emphasis on the inclusion of more of the American population was seen with the launching of a project designed at reaching the "American Protestant unchurched", as it was stated. A goal was set in 1954 of increasing church membership by 1960 of some 15,000 people to 65,000, increases in Sunday school membership of some 30,000, and increases in congregations by 100 (Section 4.8). These goals, hampered somewhat by the continued disbanding and withdrawal of Covenant congregations, fell far short of hoped-for levels. Nevertheless, the environment of the Covenant toward the end of Period II was strongly American, in particular as applies to the congregations started and those joining - there being virtually no Swedish contingents remaining to recruit - and as is witnessed by strong leanings toward making inroads in the American population as seen for example in statements by the Covenant leadership (Section 4.8).

The texture of the environment is difficult to determine here. Within the Covenant's broadened "American Protestant" environment there is little indication of or concern for competition. Accusations of competition voiced earlier from within the Covenant on various occasions throughout Period II were directed towards the Catholic Church (a typical end-of-the-1950's Protestant trait) and not towards Protestant groups, that is, the competition came from without the Covenant environment. This apprehension directed toward the Catholic Church along with the quite obvious attempts at siding with Protestant religious bodies despite a reluctance to affiliate with them on a formal basis provide solid indication that by the 1960's the Covenant identified itself in terms of the Protestant environment from which it recruited members from the late 1950's and throughout Period III.

Assuming the broader American definition of environment, the question presents itself: what was the composition of the base from which the Covenant recruited its members, and did they come from within the Covenant itself -basically a continuation of the Period II pattern- or did they come also from the outside, and if so from where?

The findings show that, at least for the years 1983-84 and presumably for many years prior, there was a large proportion of people of non-Covenant background among those joining the Covenant and a larger number of Covenant members transferring out than people of Covenant background transferring in. The figures for 1983-84 show in fact a rather large proportion of "non-Covenant" background among those transferring and converting into the Covenant. This is a definite indication of a transition under way of (mechanical properties of) Covenant identity toward a constituency gathered from within the American Protestant environment, a switch the

final outcome of which is indeed augmented by the survival of numerous residual aspects of the former Swedish identity and supported by the presence of several other ethnic congregations in its midst, places Covenant identity on parity with Covenant American environment.

Quite unlike the other Swedish emigrant denominations referred to in reference to SEMCO's early environment (Section 3.3; see also Olsson 1982), and which, for the most part, forfeited their particular Swedish ethnic quality through consolidation, merger or integration with other religious bodies, the Covenant Church remained independent as a denomination. And although the "Swedish element" of the Covenant remains to a certain extent, basically as a residual matter (Section 5.7.6), the denomination is gradually being permeated by its American Protestant environment on the congregational "grass roots" level (Section 5.7.4).

6.4 ECC and Ethnic Religion Patterns

In discussing the relationship of identity to environment (Section 2.6), a parallel was drawn between the role of society in constructing individual identity and the function of environment as the arena in which an organization is constituted, maintained and developed. Given the priority afforded environment, it was questioned what effect the environmental influence over the organization would have. Having examined the development of the Covenant organization, it is suggested here that the developments within the Covenant correspond closely to the successive stages in the development of ethnic religion in America as described by H. Stout (1975; see Section 2.6). The first thirty years of the Covenant (until approx. 1915) correspond to Stout's "immigrant phase" for which the guiding principle is oriented more towards the "ethnic solidarity of the group" than towards "spreading the gospel" (see Section 6.2). There is also a correspondence to Stout's second phase, characterized by a clustering around "Protestant-Catholic-Jew-Black" demarcations as seen particularly towards the end of Period II (Section 4.8) with cooperative efforts in a Protestant arena and apprehensions directed towards the Catholic Church. Phase 2 is marked by an expanded membership base (following Stout) to include people of American Protestant backgrounds as well, although the inclusion of these persons (of non-Covenant backgrounds) is seen in large numbers much later than the actual end of Phase 1. According to Stout, Phase 3, wherein the clustering of the previous phase gives way to a "cultural or civil religion" is not yet realized. It is suggested in connection with the Covenant that

indications exist of a broadening of the membership base and an attempt to break through the barriers of Phase 2. The presence of small numbers of persons of Catholic background was noticed, for instance, among the Covenant constituency (Table 5.13), and relations on the congregational level were noticed in connection with both Catholic and Jewish communities (Section 5.6.1). Further evidence of the expansion of the membership base beyond the Phase 2 demarcations suggested by Stout is the presence of several Black congregations in the denomination as well as congregations of several other national and ethnic origins including Estonian, Assyrian, Mexican, Korean, and Alaskan Eskimo and Indian. But whether the broadening of the membership base to include the backgrounds mentioned here is a manifestation of a national religion - "The American Way of Life" characterized by its "individual pragmatism, materialism, faith in progress through technology and nationalism" (Stout 1975 p. 214), is questionable. It is suggested here that the expanded base is, rather, a manifestation or a result of the characterization of the Covenant around related themes of "openness", "non-alignment" and "freedom" (see Section 5.7.6).

6.5 The Applicability of Identity

In discussing the approach of this study (Chapter 2), it was noted that the concept "identity" is normally associated with studies on the individual level of analysis and not used in a theoretical sense with reference to organizations as has been attempted here. It was suggested in Section 2.2 that the use of identity in examining the Covenant as an organization, while theoretical unconventional, is particularly appealing due to the accompanying aspects of immigrant groups and behavior, and religion and religious change with which identity is often associated on the individual level. That which would appear to be problematic in relating identity to the study of organizations is the perception of organizations in terms of impersonal forces. In the present study, an attempt has been made to view the Covenant as an organization consisting of several components by using data which cover several aspects: in terms of constituency, of congregations of members, of leaders, of immigrants, and of "potential" recruits, but also related to objectives, goals, decisions, activities and programs initiated by the leaders and constituency from within the Covenant. The study has relied to a large extent on aggregate Covenant data to follow changes within the organization in terms of expansion, development and increase. In this sense, the major difference between identity as an individual concept and identity as an aggregate or corporate concept is

that the latter involves a plurality of individuals, but individuals none-theless and with the capacity of being studied by similar means. To the extent that the Covenant as examined herein is viewed as an aggregate of individuals, and as a product of the interaction of the individuals (the organization's constituency) as has been suggested in the discussion in this chapter, identity as a sociological concept is fitting in view of the development within and the changes resulting from alterations in the membership basis, that is environment, of an ethnic denomination over time.

APPENDIX A

List of SEMCo Domestic Representatives, Missionaries and Evangelists:
1885-1930

Year	Name	Capacity*	Called to/Places visited
1885	C. J. Nyvall	TPS	
	P. Peterson	M	Castle Garden
	C. J. Björk	TP	
	A. Lidman	TP	
1886	A. Lidman	TP	Colorado, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah
	F. M. Johnson	TP	Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana
1887	A. L. Anderson	M	Colorado
	C. J. Björk	TP	East
	N. Peterson	TP	Minnesota, Dakota, Wisconsin
	A. Skogsberg	TP	Illinois
	C. W. Boqvist	TP	East
	C. M. Youngqvist	TP	Kansas, Missouri
	E. Berg	TP	Michigan, Wisconsin
	E. J. Hjerpe	TP	Iowa, Nebraska
	A. Larson	TP	Minnesota, Dakota
	R. B. Wallgren	TP	Illinois, Indiana
	E. Halmblad	TP	West
1888	E. Berg	TP	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
	N. P. Wallgren	TP	Illinois, Indiana
	F. Fredrikson	TP	
	C. Dahlson	TP	
1889	A. Larson	TP	Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota
	P. Waldenström	TPS	Many states, East and West
1890	A. Larson	TP	West coast, East, Central
	F. M. Johnson	E	
	J. A. Hultman	E	
	A. R. Anderson	TP	West coast
	N. P. Wallgren	TP	California
1891	A. P. Svenson		
	J. A. Boden		
	A. Lydells	M	N. Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Washington, Oregon, California
	N. P. Wallgren	TP	California
	G. Gustafson	TP	
	F. M. Johnson	E	
	J. A. Hultman	E	
	C. J. Nyvall	TPS	
1892	O. H. Myhren	TP	Montana
	J. M. Lindberg	TP	Montana
	A. Lydell	M	Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Dakota, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Nebraska
	C. W. Holm		
	J. Hagström	TP	West coast
	N. P. Wallgren	TP	
	J. Erixon	TP	
1893	A. Lydell	TP	Montana, Canada
	H. Lindeman	TP	Montana, Canada
	J. Erixon	TP	
	C. F. Pamp	TP	

1894	A. Lydell	TP	Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Canada, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Indiana, Illinois
	C. F. Pamp	TP	Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, S. Dakota, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio
1895	A. Lydell	TP	California, Central states, Mid-east
	P. Petterson	TP	California
	C. F. Pamp	TP	California
	G. F. Gilberg	TP	California
	C. J. Nyvall	TPS	
1896	A. Lydell	TR, M	Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, California, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Wisconsin, Illinois
1897	C. A. Bjork	TR	Canada, Minnesota, Dakota, Michigan, East and West coast
	A. Lydell	TR	
1898	A. Lydell	TR	
	J. A. Hultman	E	
1899	A. Lydell	TR	East and West coasts, Great Lakes region
1900	A. Lydell	TR	
1901	A. Lydell	TR	Mid-west
1902	A. Lydell	TR	
	E. A. Skogsberg	E	
	J. J. Daniels		
	G. J. Jonson		
	Gullberg	TRS	
1903	A. Lydell	TR	East coast, Eastern states, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado
1904	A. Lydell		
	G. Nelson		
	A. Gustafson		
	F. M. Johnson		
	J. J. Daniels		
	J. Peterson		
	J. G. Sjöqvist	TR	Canada
	C. O. Hofstrand	TR	Canada
1905	J. J. Daniels	E	
	P. Waldenström	TRS	Many states
1906	A. Anderson	TR	Montana
	C. B. Johnson		
	P. Petterson	TR	
	J. J. Daniels	TR	
	J. M. Westlund	E	
	I. J. Skoog	E	
1907	J. M. Westlund	E	
	J. A. Hultman	E	
1908	J. M. Westlund		
1909	Norrman	TR	Michigan, Nebraska, Minnesota
1910	E. A. Skogsberg	E	
	J. J. Daniels	E	
1913	Skogsberg	E	
1919	F. M. Johnson	E	
1920	J. Nyrén	TPS	Many states for 4 months
1926	J. Elmén	TP	Canada
1927	F. Mangs	TPS	Many states for 8 months

*TR = Travelling Representative; TRS = Travelling Representative from Sweden; E = Evangelist; TP = Travelling Preacher; M = Missionary

External Relations: Unity, Comity and Cooperation Propositions

Report Year	Initiated By/To Whom*	Purpose	Outcome
1885	Congregationalists	Swedish Department at Seminary	Established 1887-1892
1888	Free	Cooperation	Tabled
1888	SEMCo-SMF	Request to assume Alaskan mission	Granted 1889
1891	Wheaton College	Common seminary	Rejected
1896	Free	Union	Resolution in favor
1905	Free, Swedish Congreg.	Cooperation	Committee formed on comity
1907	Comity Committee	Common school, pastors' register and songbook	
1908	SMF	Coop.on school in China	Accepted
1908	Comity Comm	Unity	Resolution adopted
1909	Haugenaut synod	Unity	Rejected
1911	Comity Committee	Proposed unity	Accepted by SEMCo cong.
1915	Wheaton College	Common school	Rejected
1919	SMF	Exchange of repre- sentatives	Carried
1920	Inter-Church World Movement	Question of joining	Rejected
1920	Comity Committee	Unity issue of 1905	Accepted by delegates, turned over to congs.
1921	EMS	Unity	Joins SEMCo
1921	Missions Covenants in Sweden, Denmark Finland, Norway and America	Cooperation	Proposed
1922	Covenant, Baptists, Methodists, EFS in Sweden; SEMCo and Swedish Baptists in America	Sunday-school material	Lessons prepared
1922	Comity Committee	Unity vote	Accepted by SEMCo Rejected by the Free Committee dissolved
1925	Augustana, Baptists, Methodists, Free/ SEMCo	Cooperation	Committee proposed
1926	Swedish denomi- nations	Cooperation	Committee formed from all 5 denominations
1926	SMF	Pastors' choir to SEMCo congregations	

*Directed towards SEMCo unless otherwise stated.



FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. For a concise discussion of this and a comparison of several Swedish denominations in America, see K. Olsson 1982.
2. The problem of maintaining the interest of immigrants' children in the culture of the parents is discussed by Hansen (1952).
3. Source: Sveriges Officiella Statistik. Bidrag ur befolkningsförändringar. (Official Census of Sweden. Population changes.) These figures are for emigration to non-European countries until 1915; hereafter for emigration to all countries. According to this source, more women than men emigrated to European countries between 1851 and 1915. The report of the Uppsala Migration Research Project entitled From Sweden to America: A History of the Migration (1976) is an invaluable compilation of material dealing with the Swedish emigration to the United States from the perspectives of emigration statistics, methods, theories, causes, sources, settlement preferences, etc. Much of the above information has been taken from this study and the reader is referred to it for more in-depth recounting and further information. For detailed cartographical information on Swedish migrant origins and settlements, the two-volume study by H. Nelson (1943) is recommended.
4. For a comparison of the constitutions of the two Covenants, see S. Westberg (CA G-14).
5. Waldenströms first visit to the American Covenant came, following repeated requests, several years after the initial invitation in 1885. On the issue of the organization of Swedish Mission churches in America, Waldenström supported the idea of joining with the Congregationalists (Olsson 1962 p. 99 ff).

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 2: THE GENERAL APPROACH

1. M. Gordon (1964) defines ethnic group as "any group which is defined or set off by race, religion or national origin, or some combination of these categories" and which maintains "a shared feeling of peoplehood" (p. 23ff).
2. According to Stout, "...the ethnic group functions as the primary matrix of associations, supplying identity and meaning...to the individual within the ethnic group" (p. 205).

1. There were hints of this and complaints registered from within the denominations themselves. See for example Mellander 1900, Montgomery 1888, and various editions of the Covenant Yearbook. As can be noted in several reports, this competition consisted mainly of "congregation-stealing", but as mentioned by Mellander, efforts were also made to disrupt congregations through "member-stealing". Judging by the statistics on congregations, the Covenant, while losing few of their own congregations, were quite successful themselves at winning over others.
2. For further descriptions of these denominations and the relations between them, see K. Olsson 1982
3. As recorded in Covenant Yearbooks and else, this distinction is not always clear. Reference to membership totals nearly always includes members of associate-ember congregations as well.
4. Actually, the differentiation between rural and urban congregations in the 1926 study is less than the 100 members suggested here. The division suggested here results in some 10 percent more rural congregations than were recorded in the 1926 study.
5. The Chicago Theological Seminary maintained a Swedish department for the benefit of the Swedish Congregationalists and other Swedish groups as well until 1916. A few years after the close of this department, according to Olsson, "the affiliation of the Swedish Congregational churches with the Covenant began in earnest" (1962 p. 340).
6. One important channel of contributions both financially and otherwise was the Covenant Women's Association started in 1916. Another means of raising funds was through issuing Christmas calanders (YB91:32), very much a "Swedish" project.
7. The story of the discovery of gold in Alaska by Covenant men, including several missionaries is recorded by Carlson (1951).
8. Little did either of the Covenants anticipate the potential "wealth" of this mission field, considering the discovery of gold by Covenant missionaries. Ironically, the Covenant in Sweden made no retroactive claims on the professed "owners" and the ensuing wealth as did the Covenant in America.

9. The important role played by this paper in the debates which raged over the organization of the Covenant is documented by Olsson 1962. See also Beijbom 1977.
10. This appears to have been most prevalent in the EMS congregations (YB26:136), which may be an indication of SMF's close formal ties with Swedish Mission associations other than that SEMCo.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 4: PERIOD II

1. According to K. Olsson (1982), Swedish Methodists, Baptists, the Free all integrated with American bodies or groups during this period. Augustana joined the Lutheran Church of America in 1961).
2. The figure 74 is uncertain since the recording of statistics and congregations especially at the beginning of the period are sometimes inconsistent, incomplete and inaccurate. The reasons for congregations dropping from the records may vary. Some are stricken after having not reported for a number of years and are presumed dissolved. Dissolutions and mergers appear to account for the majority of those leaving. According to one account, 37 smaller congregations either merged or died out during the 1950's (YB58:24). A few leave to join other denominations.
3. I am most grateful to Robert C. Larson of Covenant Headquarters for making this raw data available to me. It was collected under his personal supervision and is hitherto unpublished in any form. The congregations included are Maplewood, Mt. Prospect, North Lake, Austin, Cragin, First Covenant, Ravenswood, Cyler, Winnetka, Glenview Country, Evanston, Edgebrook, Portage Park, Irving Park, Immanuel, Edgewater and North Park.
4. Just four months prior to the election of J. F. Kennedy as the first Catholic to the office of President of the USA, a resolution was brought before the Covenant convention in Chicago in which ten "areas of public concern" were outlined and for which presidential candidates of Jewish, Christian Scientist, Quaker, Mennonite and, above all (in 7 accounts of the 10), Catholic religious convictions were deemed inappropriate (YB60:248 f).
5. These two surveys were conducted on behalf of two Uppsala, Sweden researchers: Ulf Ebbesson and Sture Lindmark (see Lindmark (1971)).

1. In the tallies for Periods I and II, congregations with associate membership are counted separately based on indications in the Covenant Yearbooks. In the 1960 to 1967 congregational records, congregations with regional membership only are denoted separately from the others. For 1968, a category "associate" also appears, only to disappear later on. To draw conclusions about the number of associated congregations based on these inconsistent records would be difficult, for which reason the figures here appear as recorded in the official records. Furthermore, the figures for "Total congs." plus or minus the exclusions do not necessarily add up correctly. The discrepancies are due to a combination of things, among them: about 18 mergers took place during this period including 36 separate congregations; and the withdrawals and dissolutions were not always recorded properly. The mergers are not reflected in the gains/losses columns.

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